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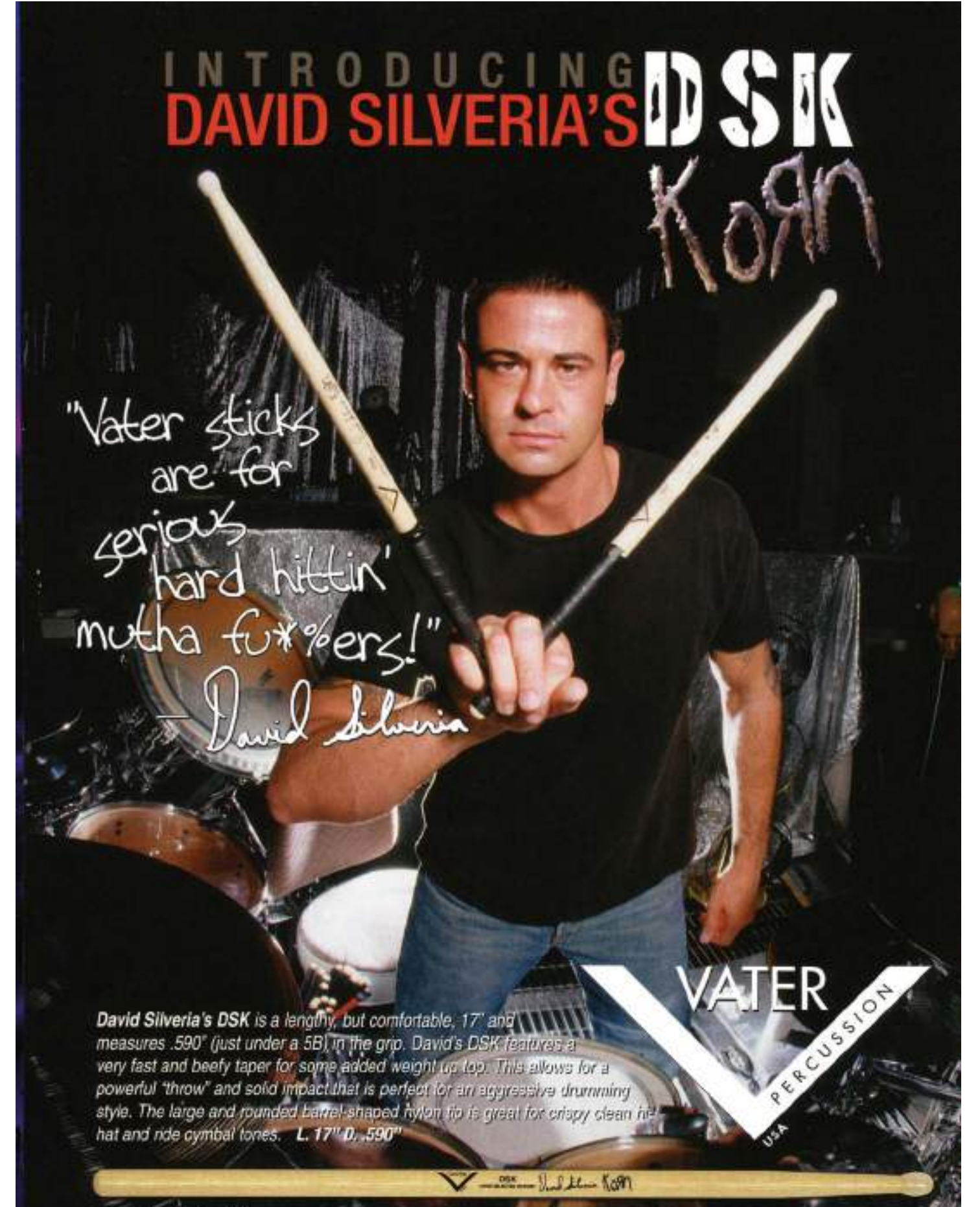

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MD's 2003 Product Extravaganza

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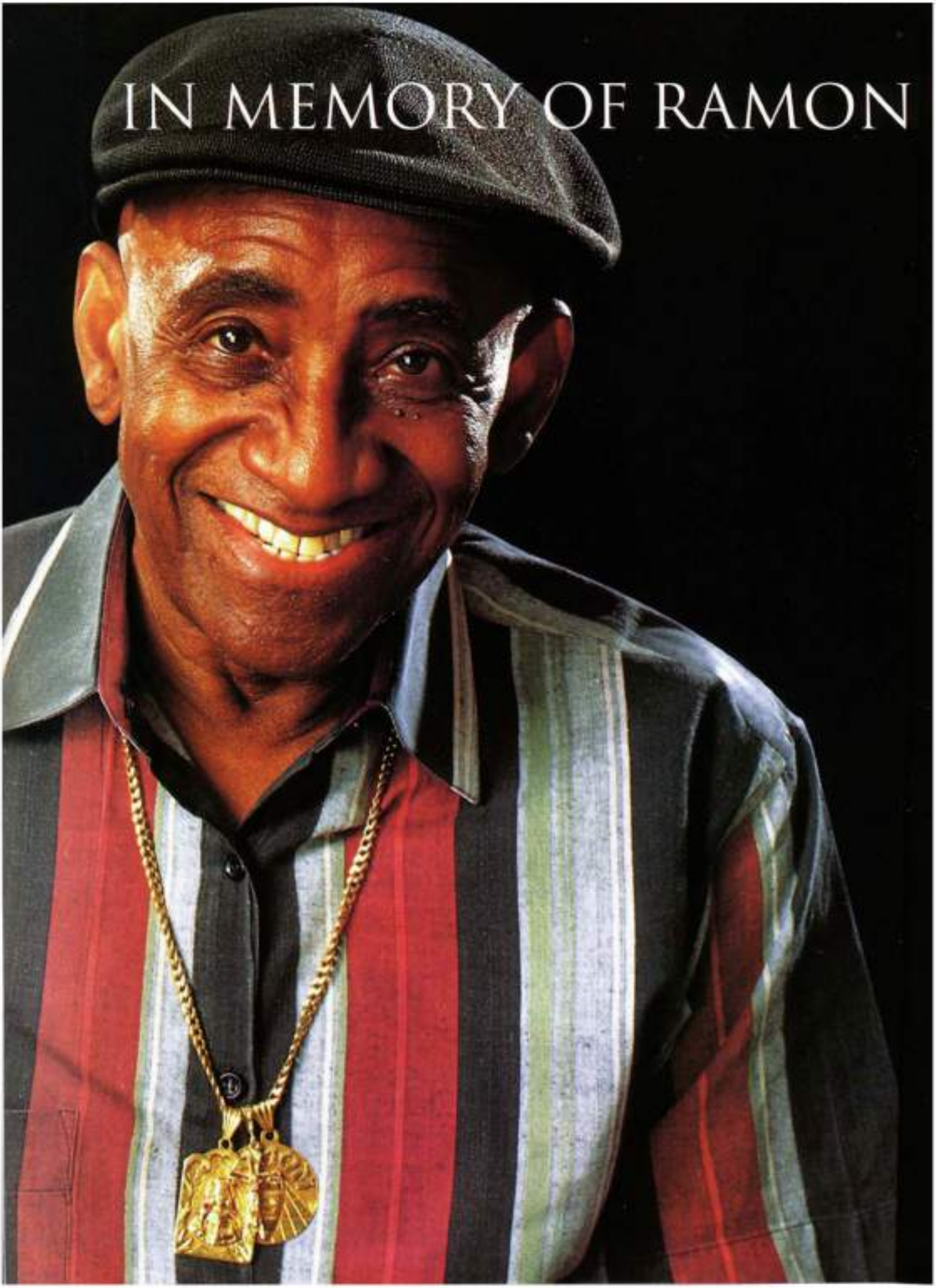
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Alex Pertout, Australia

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The Kid In The Candy Store

As I sit writing this month's editorial, I'm less than a day away from my fortieth birthday. As cliché as it sounds, as we approach this point in our lives, we do tend to reflect—you know, size ourselves up in terms of accomplishments, relationships, tastes...belt size.

In all honestly, I'm doing alright. I still behave badly with my buddies once every couple of weeks. Still spend a lot of money on new CDs. Still play out and record with my band. Still drive too fast. My politics are still left of center. My belt size is still the same...or...close.

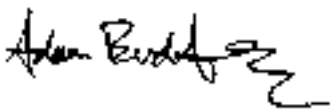
Drumming has certainly had something to do with all this. Other instruments, you perform on. The drums? You PLAY the drums. I mean, how many stories have you read in *MD* where the interviewee says something like, "My parents always knew I was going to be a drummer, because I was banging on pots and pans before I learned to talk." Our attraction to the drums is all about "playing"—making noise, improvising, creating a rhythm, eliciting a reaction, communicating. In short, living in the moment.

I firmly believe that those of us who continue to play the drums—for money or for the simple joy of it—retain the ability to play in a more general sense. And that's what keeps us young. (Well, that and never *ever* buying a mini van.)

So, what does this all have to do with this month's issue? Well, take a quick look at our cover story. See all that amazing new gear? Feel that familiar drool down the side of your mouth? Yeah, you remember the first time you felt that. That's right, it was when you were a little kid, the time you passed the local music shop and saw that amazing, shiny drumkit staring back at you from behind the glass. You could almost hear it whispering, "Come on in. Let's *play*."

To be sure, there's a lot of serious work represented in these pages—bottom lines, R&D, advertising campaigns, competition between brands...millions of dollars spent to attract our hard-earned dollars.

But as you flip through this issue and see all that great, shiny new gear, remember why you get so excited in the first place: At heart, we drummers are kids, and we just wanna go out and play.



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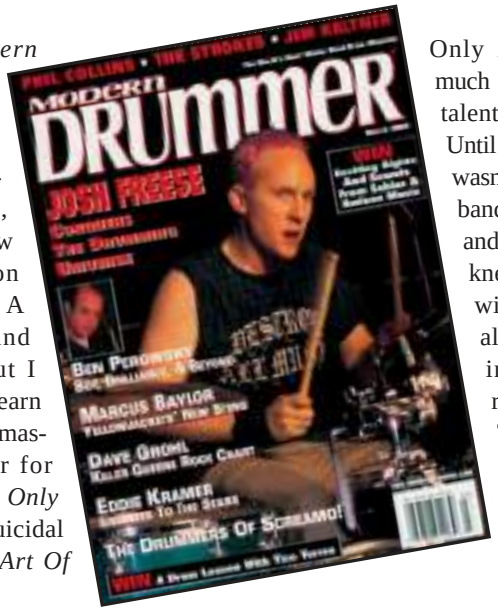
Josh Freese

I commend *Modern Drummer* for featuring one of today's greatest assets to the drumming community, Josh Freese. I knew of his playing on projects like A Perfect Circle and The Vandals. But I was intrigued to learn that Josh was the mastermind drummer for Juliana Hatfield's *Only Everything* and Suicidal Tendencies' *The Art Of Rebellion.*



Josh clearly states his love and passion for drumming on "the right music project," rather than for financial gain and huge success. Although it's hard not to go where the money tempts one to go, virtuoso drummers like Neil Peart—and modern-day successors like Josh Freese—took the admirable path as true, dedicated musicians. In doing so, they *earned* their success thus far. I wish more drummers—and musicians/entertainers in general—would have attitudes like Josh's. Successful artists should be more thankful for where they are in life. And they should always remember that they, too, used to be stuck in the constant struggle of ordinary, everyday work life—like the rest of us dreamers.

Rolf Gunnar Hauge
Evergreen, CO

Only *MD* would have so much information on a great talent such as Josh Freese. Until the March 2003 issue I wasn't aware of all the great bands Josh has performed and recorded with. I only knew of his recent work with A Perfect Circle. I also wasn't aware how in-demand for studio recordings he really is. Thanks for all the great information on our favorite drummers. Please keep up the great work.

Shane Travis
via Internet

Ben Perowsky

I commend *MD* for presenting Ben Perowsky's important insights in the March 2003 issue. Mr. Perowsky's career illustrates how being a true innovator involves two crucial elements. The first is taking the responsibility to perfect one's craft. The second is making other people understand that no matter how far music has evolved, there is always a new path that it can take.

People (drummers and non-drummers) often don't realize that labeling other individuals only serves to minimize their contributions to the world. Labeling comes from a need to understand how people and things fit into the world around us. But, as illustrated by Ben Perowsky, sometimes understanding is not needed. Some people and things are just to be appreciated.

George
Pittsburgh, PA

Eddie Kramer's Different View

Buy Mr. Amendola a set of drums! The article on Eddie Kramer was great. What an insight into what he has done over the years. Mr. Kramer hit home with his info on the different drummers he's worked with. And I loved his attitude about "If it takes you more than twenty minutes to get a drum sound, I'm outta here."

I especially appreciated Eddie's comments on Humble Pie drummer Jerry Shirley. A few years ago I had the opportunity to open for Humble Pie here in Ventura County. Mr. Shirley used my drums, and he is every bit the gentleman and one hell of a drummer.

Articles like this are why I read *Modern Drummer*. We not only learn about great drummers, we also learn from the folks who recorded those great drummers, and can inform us about their music and about what really goes on in the studio.

Dave Betti
ex-drummer, Brand X
Ventura, California

Marcus Baylor

I've just finished your March interview with Marcus Baylor. It's always great to read about someone who simply loves drumming and music. This guy has such a positive and refreshing attitude towards the drums, and the role of the drummer. The music is what it's all about. Hasn't anyone grown tired of all the debate over busy vs. sparse playing? If the song warrants hard, fast, complex drumming, then

Rock Charts Error

I was just checking out the *Rock Charts* transcription of Queen Of The Stone Age's "No One Knows," from the March 2003 *MD*. A figure that repeats throughout the transcription, first appearing in the fourth bar, is notated incorrectly. As notated, there's a snare setup on count 4 and a bass drum/open-hat accent on the second 8th triplet partial of count 4. The actual part is a snare drum setup on the last 8th note triplet partial of count 3, with the bass drum/open hat accent landing on count 4.

Marshall Richardson
Nashville, TN

Transcriber Joe Bergamini responds: As soon as the March MD *came out, one of my students called to let me know there was a mistake in the chart for "No One Knows."* MD *received several letters along the same line. Despite the error, I am very pleased to know how many people are reading these charts!*

The error on the chart is actually a typo. You'll notice that later in the chart the same passage is printed correctly. (I guess I have to stop proofreading my work at 2:00 A.M., and do it when I'm awake!) If anyone wants the corrected chart, I can be reached through my Web site at www.joebergamini.com.

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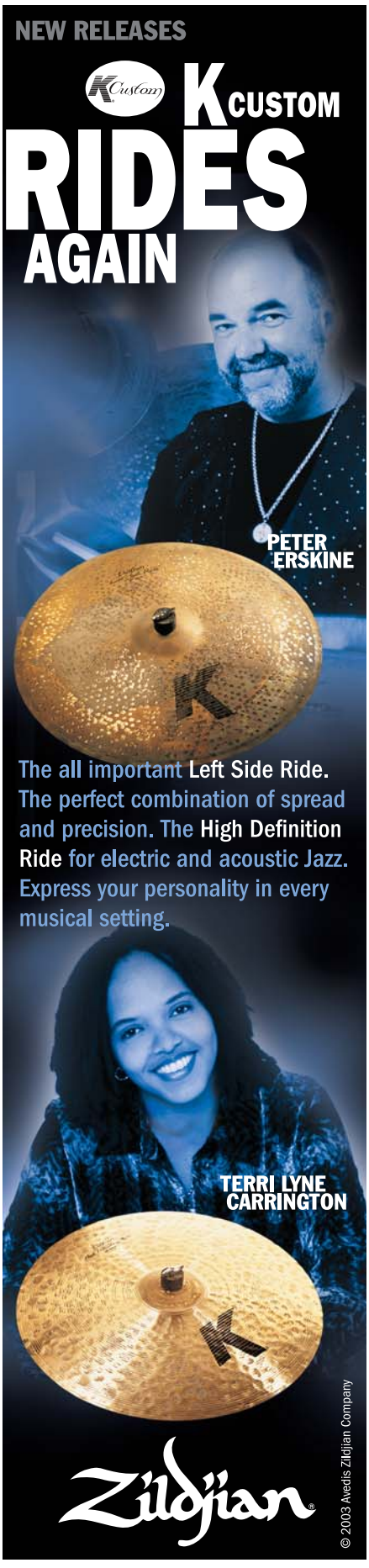

that *is* musical. But if it needs soft, laid-back, open playing, then *that*'s what's musical. Can you imagine Billy Cobham's drumming on "Vital Transformation" being used on Sade's "Smooth Operator"? Every time I hear someone say that you have to push the limits to be a real drummer, I wonder what they mean. Are they saying that artists like Art Taylor and Jimmy Cobb weren't real drummers?

I loved it when Marcus said, "I want to become *part* of the tapestry of the sound." My hat is off to Marcus Baylor. This is a drummer we will hear about over and over for years to come.

Jeffery Serfes
via Internet

With the world in such turmoil and upheaval, Marcus Baylor seems to have everything straight. He's right: You *can* be a Christian and still play drums. Great article on a drummer who "prays *and* plays."

Brian Gunter
via Internet

Playing Unmiked, Part 2

I found T. Bruce Wittet's "Playing Unmiked, Part 2" in your March issue to be both enlightening and informative. Like most drummers playing smaller venues, I frequently find myself in situations where I have to adjust my playing style in order to accommodate those volume-sensitive rooms. It's always challenging—and often frustrating—to have to tappity-tap your way through a set of rock 'n' roll, rockin' country, or anything else that requires some energy.

Regarding the various drumstick alternatives that Mr. Wittet mentioned, I agree that multi-rods, split sticks, plastic brushes, and so forth are not always the best option. However, upon reading the October '02 *MD* product review of Vic Firth's Blades, I've since found them to be extremely versatile in low- and medium-volume situations. Unlike rods and brushes, the Blades produce a distinct tick on a ride cymbal, as well as a crisp, fat rimshot slap on the snare and toms—without being ear-piercing.

Congrats to Mr. Wittet for "feeling our pain." Good stuff. And thanks to *MD* for all the great articles, interviews, and product-awareness features.

G. Milton
via Internet

Plight Of The Session Drummer

In your March 2003 cover story, it's mentioned that Josh Freese has worked on projects on which he played the drum tracks that are on the final recording, but is not credited as having done so. I also noticed that (along with other "session" drummers), Josh has worked on projects with some bands that supposedly have drummers.

I can definitely understand the need for this procedure from a producer's perspective. A producer wants the best possible recorded performance, and if one musician can't achieve that in a timely fashion, the producer needs to find another who can. Still, I find this to be a bit deceptive from a music buyer/fan's perspective. If I buy a recording by an artist, I expect to be purchasing art that is created by that artist. If I listen to a piece of music and am moved by it, I should be aware of who it is that is moving me. If I become a fan of a drummer because I like his or her playing on certain recordings, I should be confident that it *was*, in fact, that drummer I've been listening to.

I suspect that the practice of musician substitution is more widespread than we are aware. At the least, the musicians who actually create a piece of music should be credited as having done so. I would rather buy music that was "flawed" than to be led to think one musician created it when another actually had. I know music is a business. But deceiving your customers is never *good* business.

Thom Keddy
Watertown, MA

OOPS!

In our March 2003 cover story on Josh Freese, Josh repeatedly mentions bassist "Scott Tunis" as a major influence on his musical development. In reality, the gentleman's name is Scott Thunes. We apologize for the error.

How To Reach Us

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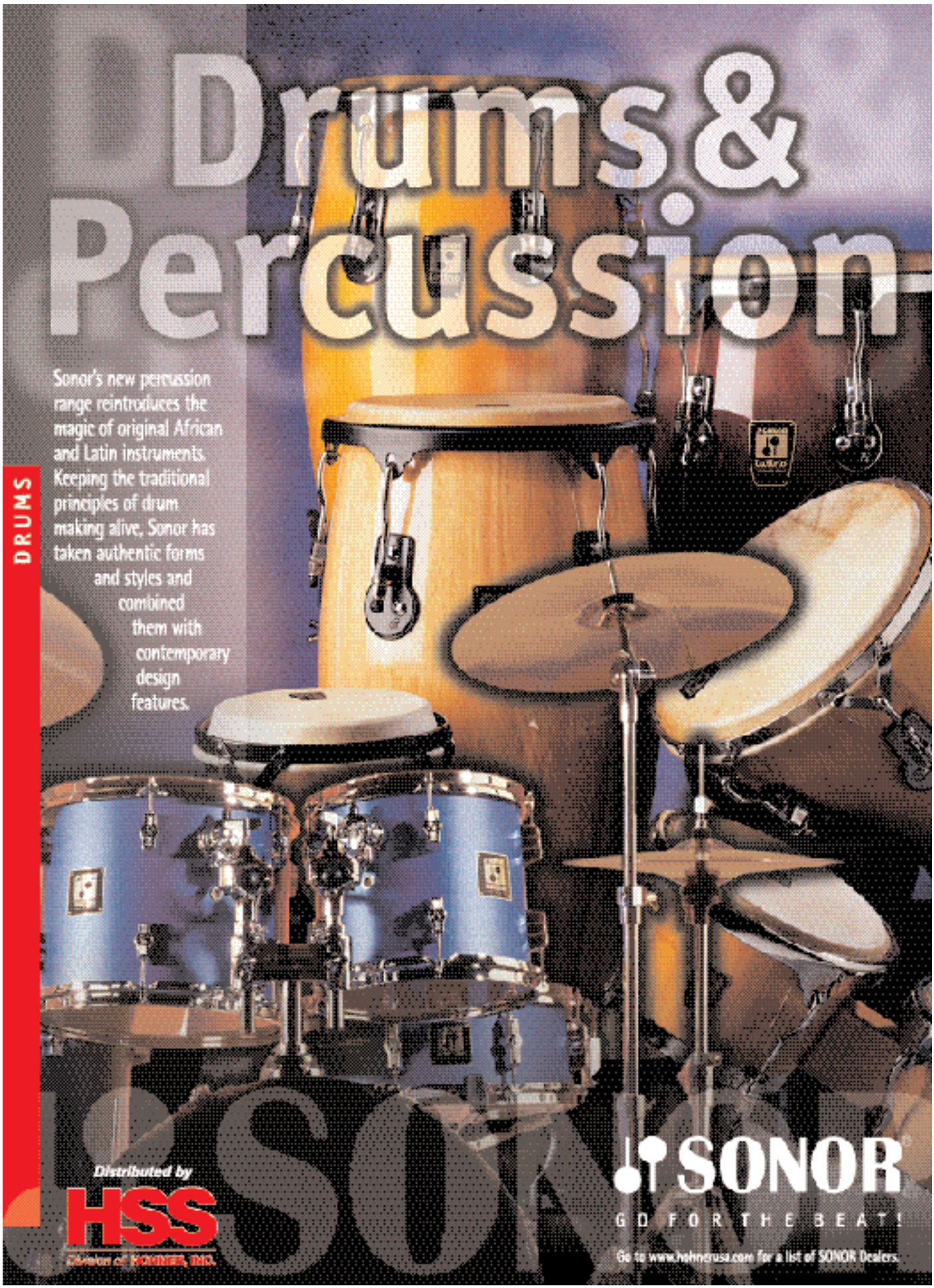
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Paiste Sound Set Cymbal

Q The bass player of my band recently gave me an old Paiste cymbal. It appears to be an 8" splash, but it's quite heavy and has a definite bell sound when struck. Engraved on the cymbal is: PAISTE FORMULA 602. I'm familiar with this particular Paiste line, but this cymbal also has SEVEN SOUND SET 1 stamped on it in red. How old is this cymbal? Is it really a splash cymbal even though it weighs quite a lot more than a run-of-the-mill splash? How long was the Seven Sound Set in existence? And can you tell me roughly what this model is worth?

Moe Cullity
Toronto, Ontario, Canada

A Our answer comes from Paiste's Steve Riskin, who responds, "The Paiste Seven Sound Set Included: No. 1 8" Bell, No. 2 11" Splash, No. 3 17" Bright Ride, No. 4 18" Flat Ride, No. 5 18" Ride Crash, No. 6 18" China Type, and No. 7 20" Deep Ride. The Set was offered within the whole 602 range back in the 1960s and '70s. The cymbals were made from the same B20 Bronze as all other 602 cymbals.

"It's hard to put a current value on a cymbal like yours. However, it would be realistic to price it similarly to a current Signature 8" Bell, which retails for $206. However, considering the rarity of a 602 cymbal like the 8" bell, I wouldn't be surprised if someone would pay more for it."

Transcription Machines

Q I'm looking for information on the transcription machines that John Riley mentioned in one of his recent articles. Could you recommend a brand and tell me where to find one?

Scott T. Cummings
via Internet

A We checked with John himself, who responds, "I'm glad you're interested in doing some transcribing. In the past, I've used a number of different devices, and they all make the process a little easier. But transcribing is still a chore. Here's a list of the machines that I'm familiar with.

Sony TCS 450: a cassette Walkman with a pitch control capable of slowing a tape by about $^1/_3$.

Marantz PMD-201: a cassette deck capable of slowing to $^1/_2$ speed.

Akai Riff-O-Matic U400: a digital slowing device with line-in jacks for a CD, minidisc, or cassette.

Transkriber computer software: a program that facilitates slowing music via your computer disc drive.

"I honestly haven't looked at the latest transcribing technology; I imagine there are newer processes available. I'm sure that, through transcribing, you will gain new insight and gather valuable material. Good luck."

Hayman Drum Parts

This classic Hayman kit photo courtesy of Bobby Chiasson, Jollity Drum Farm.

Q I have a set of British-made George Hayman Drums. It's missing the tuning rods, which are a completely different thread and diameter from current generic tuning rods. Do you know of any source for parts for my kit? I've heard other George Hayman kits and they sound great, so any help you can give will be much appreciated.

Malcolm Blake
Napier, New Zealand

A As you mention, Hayman drums were made in England in the 1960s and '70s, and they utilized differently sized hardware from that used by most other companies. Our drum historian, Harry Cangany, suggests that the best contact for parts is Lou Dias of Supreme Drums, in England. His Web site is www.suprememusic.co.uk.

Ludwig Die-Cast Rims

Q I'm currently restoring a 1970s Ludwig Acrolite snare drum to replace one that was stolen from me. On my original Acrolite, I had installed Ludwig die-cast rims on the batter and snare sides. I have been scouring the Web and cannot find these rims for sale anywhere. Are they still in production? Am I not calling them by the correct name? Any help or information would be greatly appreciated.

Mark Ludwig
via Internet

A Ludwig product manager Jim Catalano replies, "Great name, Mark! Unfortunately, the specific models of die-cast rims you're seeking are no longer in production at Ludwig. Those were Ludwig USA-made "Twin Channel Hoops" originally designed for our marching drums. The application to drumset drums was an easy fit, but the models were a bit on the heavy side and quite large in profile. The best source of supply for these discontinued hoops is the vintage drum community. Check out Web sites like Rebeats Vintage Drums (www.rebeats.com), NotSoModernDrummer (www.notsomodernddrummer.com), Vintage Drum Center (www.vintagedrum.com), A Drummer's Tradition (www.adrummerstradition.com), and Atlanta Vintage Drums (www.atlantavintagedrums.com).

"Several years ago, Ludwig started to market new, streamlined die-cast hoops (batter and snare side) that are available in 8- and 10-lug versions for 14"-diameter drums. These hoops can be ordered in chrome or brass-plated finishes, and are priced from $40 to $48 retail. Thanks for your interest in Ludwig drums."

Hi-Hat Clutch Loosening

Q I've been playing rock drums for about three years. I have a problem with my hi-hat cymbals loosening all the time. I have to re-tighten them after only about 3 songs. Is this just from hard playing, or am I doing something wrong?

Matt
via Internet

A Hi-hats that loosen is a problem that has no perfect solution. Most drummers

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experience the problem to some degree. And yes, harder playing will hasten the loosening process.

Most hi-hat clutches have a locking device underneath the top cymbal, as well as some sort of locking nuts or other method of securing the cymbal on top. You need to be sure that these devices are set securely before you start playing. Please note that this doesn't mean the top cymbal should be tightened into a rigid position. That would prevent a "washy" rock hi-hat sound, and could conceivably damage the cymbal. You need to find the proper tension for the cymbal for your musical applications, and then make sure that the locking nuts are set firmly to hold the cymbal in that position.

The use of good, firm felts above and below the cymbal will help the situation. Older, softer felts don't offer much resistance to the locking nuts, and thus allow "play" in the cymbal that can work the nuts loose.

Clutches today are much improved over those of only a few years ago. However, *no* hi-hat clutch can totally prevent cymbals from coming loose. If they did, you couldn't get the cymbals *off* the clutch to pack up!

//DAVE SCHIFF

writer/album art collector/dad
stream presets_octane/hard attack/symphony hall/left of center

Hometown: Miami, Florida. Covered neck to ankle, he s logged over 170 hours in a tattoo chair. Saraswati, the lute playing Hindu goddess of music covers entire right arm. Favorite concert venue: Lion s Lair in Denver.

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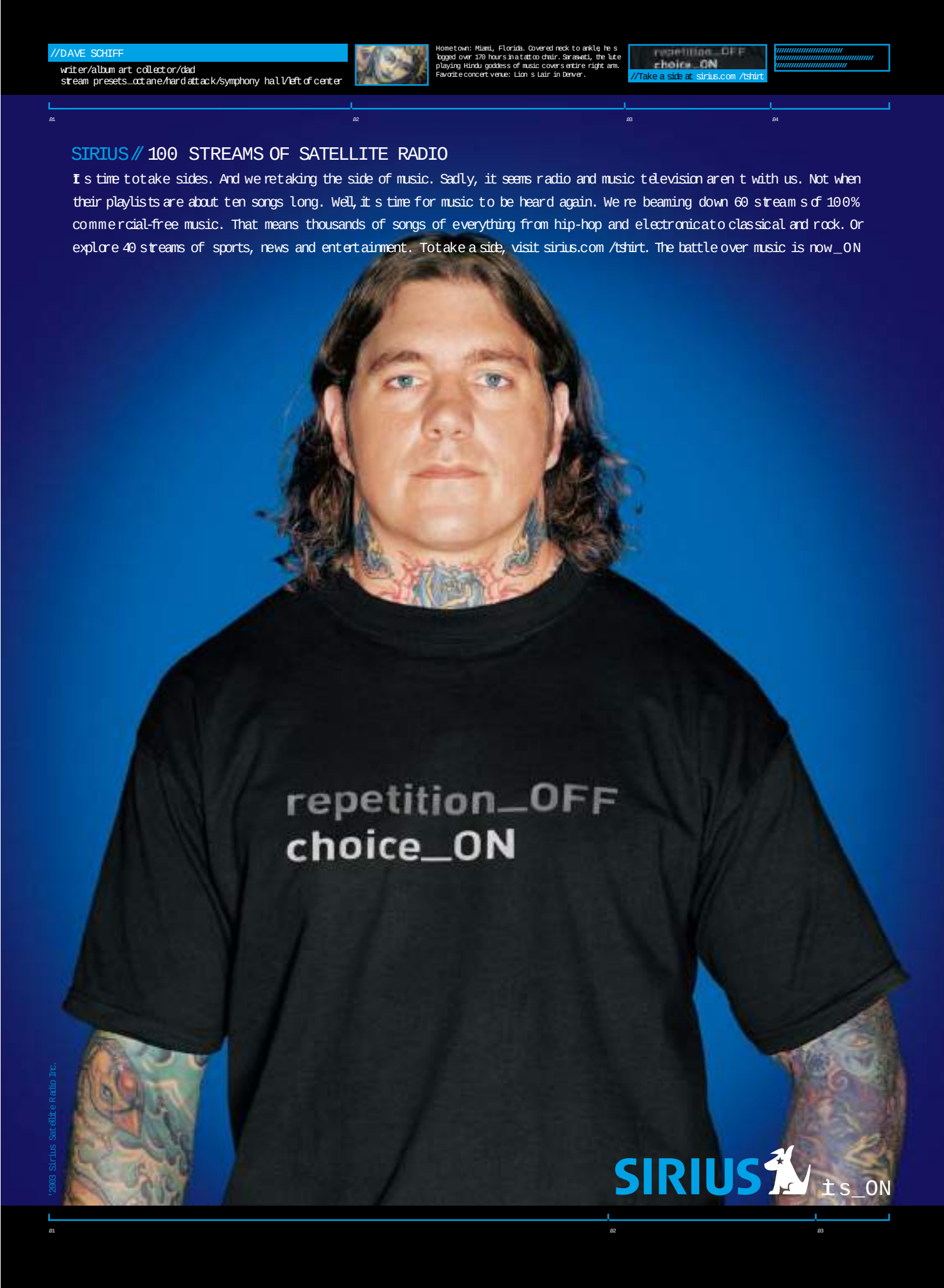

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Double Bass Tips From
Mike Portnoy And Gregg Bissonette

Q I've recently been working out of *The Encyclopedia Of Double Bass Drumming* by Bobby Rondinelli and Michael Lauren. I'm very dedicated to my practice time because I enjoy the challenge and aspire to get the control and speed that you have. (You're my two favorite drummers). Before I got the book, I played with my heels planted on the pedal board. I got a great calf workout, but not the improvement I sought. I've tried playing on the balls of my feet like the book suggests, but now I feel off balance. Where on the pedal and how do you play?

Todd Wahlin
via Internet

A **Mike Portnoy responds:** I've always played heels-up, with the front of my foot planted about 80% of the way up the pedal board. I sit pretty high, which makes it pretty uncomfortable (and almost impossible) for me to play flat-footed.

My *Liquid Drum Theater* instructional DVD has a multi-camera option where you can watch a few entire songs performed from the kick-drum camera. With that feature, you can really analyze my feet and see (what I consider) my very unorthodox and probably technically incorrect footing while I play.

I've always believed that there is no "right" and "wrong" in drumming. It's all down to individual styles, and playing the way you're comfortable. If everybody played the same way, sat the same way, held sticks the same way, and so on, you wouldn't have players breaking new ground or creating new ideas.

Gregg Bissonette responds: I've played heel-up my entire life. I really like the power I get from that technique. However, I've been inspired lately to work on heel down by two drummer pals of mine: Myron Grombacher and Doane Perry. Both of these guys have amazingly fast feet and can do it all very musically with their heels down. I'm always up for something new, so I'm giving it a

The Zappa-esque Drum Sounds Of Ralph Humphrey

Q I'm currently playing in a Frank Zappa tribute band. Many of the songs we're playing—like "I'm The Slime" and "Dynamo Hum"—feature your drumming, and you're my favorite of all Zappa drummers.

Your drum sound on the original recordings is a funky, fat, dirty, groovy sound that fit the music perfectly. I realize that some of that may have had to do with engineering and production in the studio. But can you suggest how I might obtain a similar sound from an acoustic standpoint? I tend to play a particular style of music much better when the sound of my drums is appropriate for that style. I have three kits and several snare drums to choose from. So any advice or descriptions of equipment used on the original recordings would be greatly appreciated.

Steve Percoco
via Internet

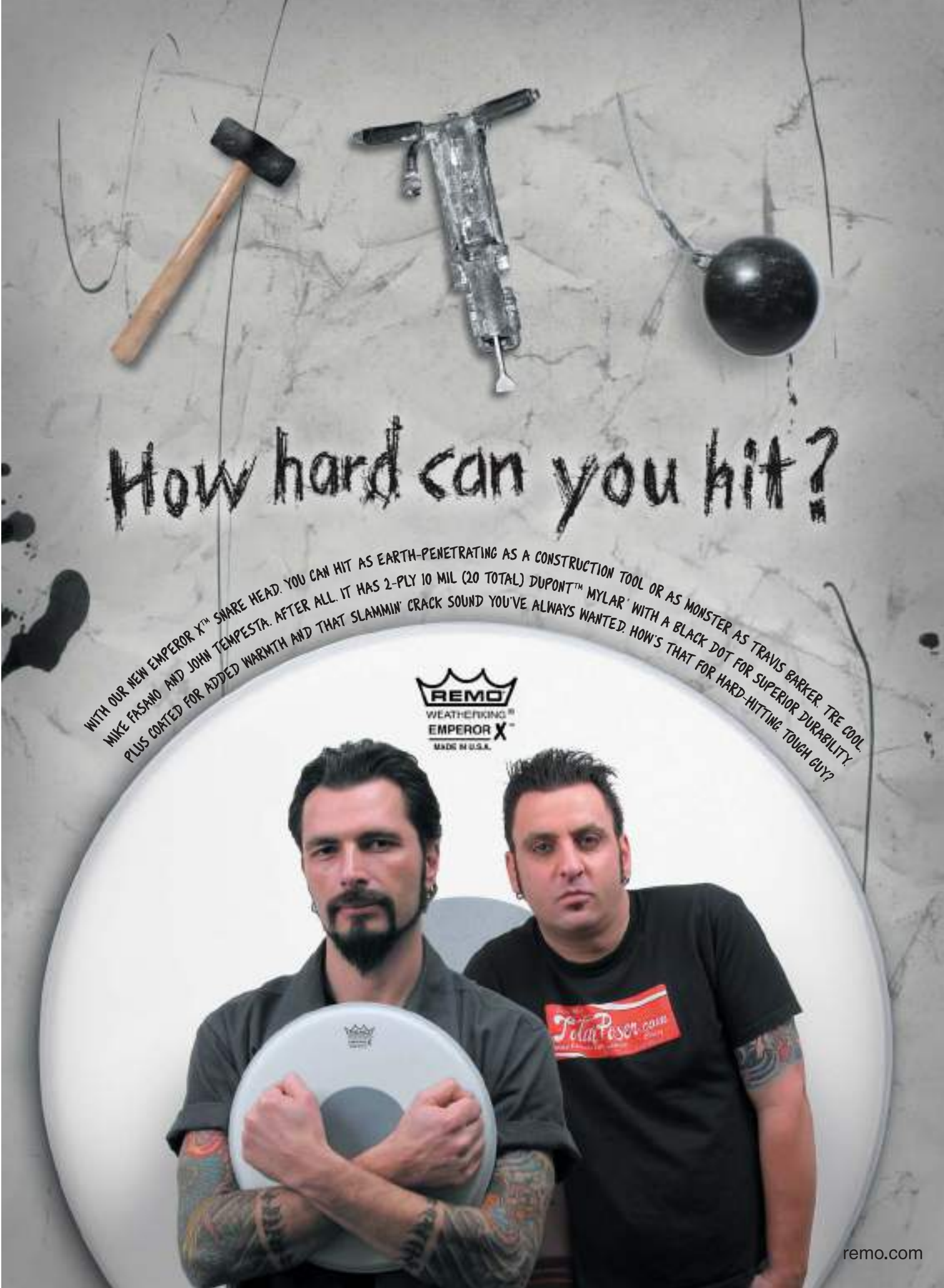
A Thanks for your inquiry, and also for the compliment. Playing with Zappa was a special time in my life. His music was some of the most challenging I have ever played, then or since. Your band must be having a ball as it tries to play some of this great music.

For the Zappa recordings, I was initially using a Pearl fiberglass set with Remo Ambassadors top and bottom. The tom sizes were

12", 13", 16", and 18", with a 22" bass drum. To my recollection, the snare was a metal Ludwig with an Ambassador batter.

Frank was a genius at tweaking instrumental and vocal sounds to get the unique quality of the final product. I wasn't present during the mixing process, so I don't know the procedures that he used. But it seems like he compressed the heck out of the drums to get them to sound the way they do on the recordings—a real snug but punchy kind of sound. I don't know what you could do to emulate that sound in a live setting.

To be honest, the sound that I had "live" with Frank was not the same as the recorded sound. My guess is that any of the drums you own would work equally well. I don't think muffling the drums will get the sound you're looking for. And it's not necessarily in the tuning either. You'll have to be satisfied with just getting a good sound out of what you have. If you ever record the music, you can experiment with processing in the studio once you have the basic tracks recorded.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Dave Weckl On Snare Buzz

Q I think your Dual Strainer 5½x14 Aluminum Signature Model Snare Drum is the best-sounding snare drum I've ever played. But I'm having a big problem with snare vibration when playing the toms or bass drum. I've tried all combinations of head tuning on both the batter and the snare side, along with tight and loose adjustments of the snare strainers. I use your tuning method on the toms, but I still can't alleviate the snare vibrations. What do you suggest?

Larry Davis
via Internet

Heinz Kronberger

A I'm glad you dig my Yamaha signature aluminum drum. I've been using it as my main snare drum for the past eight years now, and I still love it too!

As to your problem with the snare buzz: You have to realize that with all those wires down there (on the two strainers), there will be more snare response, both directly and indirectly. Usually, "sympathetic snare buzz" problems arise from one or two toms that are too close in size and tuning to a given snare. But since you say it's happening with the bass drum and all the toms, it sounds like it might be "normal" snare response—but just more than you might be used to.

Generally, you'll never hear this buzzing to the point of it being a problem in a band situation on stage. Remember too that with the prescribed adjustment settings of both strainers (the stainless wires fairly loose, and the other ones fairly tight), there is really no need for a mic' under the drum. I find I get enough snare sound without it. So I think that as long as you're not miking the drum underneath, you should be okay. You might just need to get used to the little extra snare sound overall.

Having said that, there are some things worth checking out. The first is the tom tuning. I tune the top heads a little higher these days than "just above wrinkle." And the bottom head is also a factor. The bottom heads on the toms could be too tight, which could be affecting the snare resonation. Try a medium tuning on both sides of, say, a 12" tom, getting both heads as evenly tuned as you can. See if that makes any difference.

One more suggestion is to make sure the bottom head on the snare is fairly tight. The response of the drum will be better overall, and the snares will vibrate more freely. They won't get "stuck" in the head as they vibrate, which really sounds bad when that resonating occurs. Good luck with your experiments, and I hope you continue to enjoy the drum!

Repeat Bar

A Classic Quote From MD's Past

Paul La Roia

"Chops are fine, but being able to groove and to play with feel is what it's all about. When I sit down to play, I pour my heart into every note. That's what Steve Gadd does, and that's why he's been such a big influence."

Mary J. Blige's **Gerald Heyward**, July 2002

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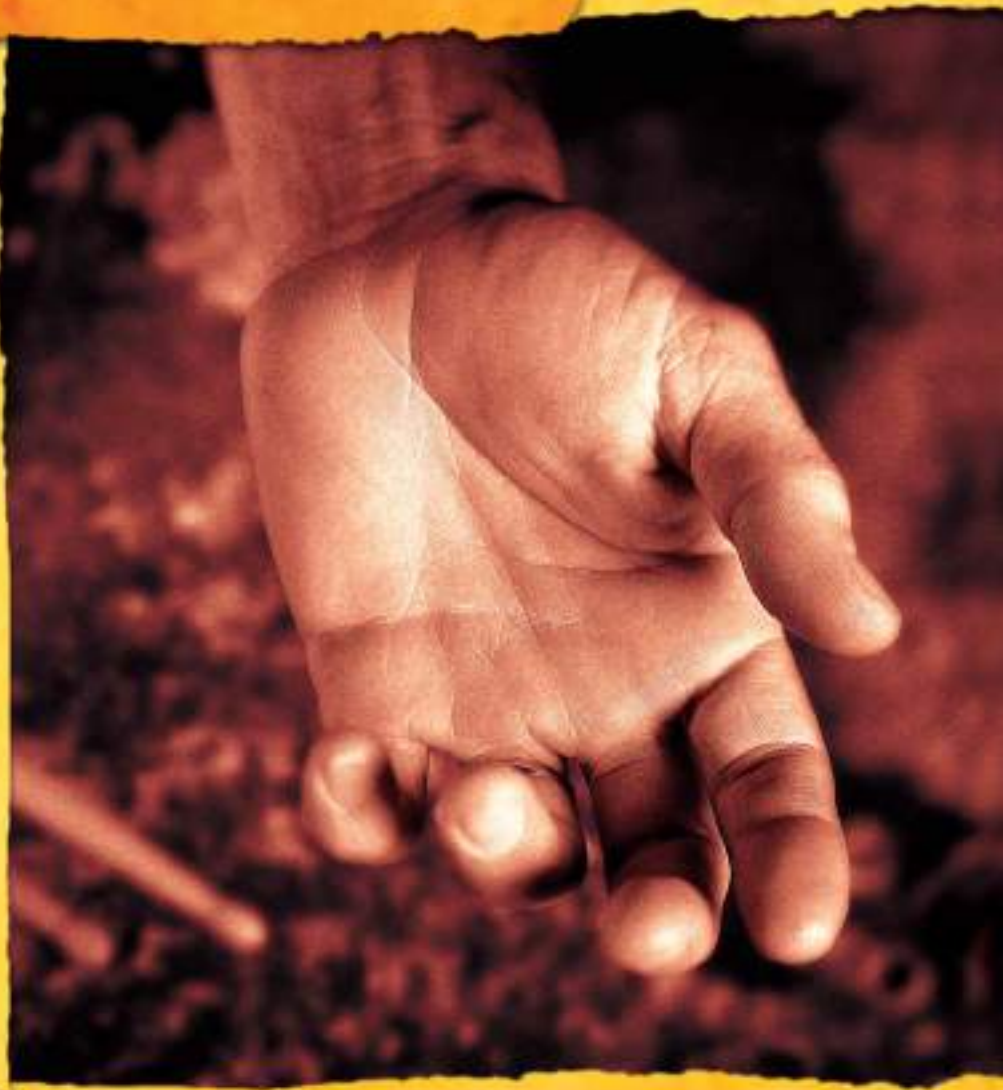

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Saliva's
Paul Crosby
Making Good Choices

Two thousand and two was a wild ride for Memphis rockers Saliva—world tours, a Grammy nomination, platinum sales of their 2001 debut *Every Six Seconds*, and vocalist Josey Scott singing co-lead with Nickelback's Chad Kroeger on "Hero," the massive hit from *Spiderman*. When it rains, it pours.

Every Six Seconds' melodic/rap metal amalgam caused a commotion among nü-metal fans, and if a join-in-order-to-lead approach was part of Saliva's strategy for success, it paid off. The gangsta rap appeal of "Click Click Boom" and the ferocious "My Disease" granted instant access to the crowd over whose heads Saliva easily surfed to commercial success. But the album's biggest surprise was "Hollywood," a mid-tempo ballad with country rock leanings on which Saliva sounded most in their element.

"We're all huge southern rock fans," admits drummer Paul Crosby. "Being from the South, we probably didn't have much of a choice but to be inspired by those bands." It's not surprising, then, that Saliva's sophomore album, *Back Into Your System*, expands the group's aggro palette with a few hook-heavy pop ballads and infuses the edgier rock songs with the southern rock hip-shake of compatriots like .38 Special and Molly Hatchet.

Crosby has a simple answer for what separates Saliva both from nü-metal and mainstream hard rock bands. "We base our music on hard-rocking verses but melodic, pretty choruses," he says. "Bands like Creed have got the good choruses, but they don't have the rocking verses. Korn's got the rocking verses but not the cool choruses. We fit in with all that, but we're a little bit different. I think we're a step above."

While Paul doesn't consider himself as technical a player as his drumming influences, he claims that's intentional. "I don't want anyone to watch me play and go, 'Let me guess: Danny Carey, Mike Portnoy, and Neil Peart.' If I tried to learn and cop all of the technical stuff that they're doing—and put it into my playing—I think it would be false. I want to have my own style."

One of the biggest compliments Crosby has received on his playing came from James Tierney, the A&R guy at Mapex, who's an accomplished touring drummer. "James told me, 'Its not that you're so technical. It's the choices you make on your fills and patterns that blow me away.'"

Gail Worley

Brian Stephens

The Heart Of A Musician

"I'm a sonic chameleon," says drummer Brian Stephens. "Throughout my career, I've done *so* many kinds of gigs. The day before I left for a break, I did a country session during the day and in the evening played with a ska group. I can change what I do to fit any situation."

Stephens attributes his versatility to his love for a wide range of musical styles and his commitment to making a living as a drummer. "There is the business side of me that says, If you want to eat, you'd better be able to do anything," he says. "When the phone rings, if I'm available, I'll do it. I didn't have the advantage of affluent parents, so I have to depend on myself."

Stephens' résumé reveals the range of gigs he has landed, everything from shows with The Drifters, The Coasters, and The Shirelles to stage productions of *West Side Story* and *Oklahoma*. Stephens is also currently working on *Stand Up And Testify*, a CD of all original music. "Stylistically, it's going to be a combination of modern guitar rock, R&B/hip-hop, and jazz," Stephens says. "It's going to be a real departure from what most people think of as jazz music. The aim is to create a jazz album slanted toward the 'Gen X' demographic, something that can attract a younger crowd while not alienating older jazz enthusiasts."

Indeed, Stephens is active and successful in a variety of music-related pursuits. Like many other drummers, he is a private instructor and a clinician. However, he's extended his gifts as a teacher, creating and completing several other projects. He developed and released *Stickin' It Out: The Anatomy Of A Professional Drummer, Steps To Becoming A Pro*, a two-CD package that covers a range of topics including goal setting, skills and repertoire, equipment, and developing a business plan. Stephens is also a writer, having penned a workbook to go with the CD, as well as articles for *Modern Drummer* and several other music publications. Finally, the drummer owns his own studio, where he composes, arranges, records, and produces music for commercial CDs, television, radio, and industrial films.

"At heart, I am a creative person, a player," Stephens says, "whether I'm teaching, running the studio, or writing. I'm a musician first, no matter what role I'm playing."

For more information on Stephens' CD and other educational projects, go to www.brianstephens.com.

Harriet L. Schwartz

The Funky Meters' Russell Batiste Spreading The Groove

It wasn't that Russell Batiste *needed* another project when the idea of Vida Blue was presented to him last year. But once he sat down to jam with Phish's Page McConnell and The Allman Brothers' Oteil Burbridge, the deal was done. "I had never heard Oteil before," Batiste says. "But when he started playing, I just had to stare at him. Then Page came in on that little Andromeda keyboard, and I started kicking it. The stuff started rolling, man, and it was the most fun I've had in a long time. And when we played live, I was almost in heaven."

At thirty-seven, Batiste is already part of New Orleans musical folklore, having replaced Zigaboo Modeliste in The Meters (now The Funky Meters) in 1989. In recent years he's branched out to play and record with George Porter, Papa Grows Funk, Robbie Robertson, and Harry Connick Jr. (Check out his opening fill on the title track of *She*.) He also composes for and records his own band, Orchestra In Da Hood.

The *Vida Blue* album shows Batiste to be a master of texture and changing gears. "Anybody can solo," he says. "Anybody can sit behind the drums and go nuts. Anybody can play riffs on the bass, and anybody can play songs on the piano. But playing music is when two or more people get together from out of nowhere and turn it into something."

Batiste credits many New Orleans funk drummers for inspiration, but most of all Stanley Ratcliff and Zigaboo Modeliste. "When you hear me going off," he says, "you hear Stanley. And my father played keyboards in The Meters, so I used to fall asleep right underneath Zig while they were practicing. I got his flavor mixed up with Stanley's flavor, and I came up with a flavor that no one else has. You know what's incredible? Those great players got a chance to watch me, and then went back and practiced the stuff *I* was doing. That ain't no lie."

Robin Tolleson

METALWOOD'S

Ian Froman Every Note Counts

Ferocious! That's Ian Froman live with Dave Liebman, Rick Margitza, and his own band, Metalwood. If Froman kept a proper scrapbook, instead of envelopes strewn about his Greenwich Village co-op, it would be bulging with clippings exclaiming much the same thing.

Case in point: When *Downbeat* magazine covered Metalwood gigging in support of *The Recline*, it stated, "Froman stood out as the group's most dynamic performer. He soloed frenetically." Ian creates the same intensity on Sheryl Bailey's acclaimed *Power Of 3* and on Wolfgang Schalk's *Rainbows In The Night*, where he's joined by David Kikosky, Roy Haynes' pianist. To hear Froman really killing, check out a date by ex-Miles saxophonist Rick Margitza, *Heart Of Hearts*.

Explaining his full-tilt performances, Ian says, "I've worked extensively with great people, from Miroslav Vitous to Gary Burton to Liebman. They generate such serious time and sound, it's shaped my approach: Every note counts. Although I create an illusion that I'm playing loose and broken, I'm adhering to a strong time policy. When I play quietly, I'm still burning. Margitza's told me, "Man, you really played the room tonight,' and people say, 'It was cooking…but it wasn't loud!'"

If you want to talk Paiste cymbals in New York City, hook up with Froman. "Paiste Traditionals are warmer than old Turkish cymbals," Ian enthuses. "I like creating new music on them, as opposed to old cymbals that already have music in them." Ian leads potential endorsers up to

DRUM DATES

This month's important events in drumming history

Chick Webb died in June of 1939.

On June 22, 1963, the Surfaris released "Wipe Out," one of the great rock instrumentals of all time, featuring **Ron Wilson's** classic drum solo break.

On June 4, 1964, The Rolling Stones (with **Charlie Watts** on drums) arrive in New York City to begin their first US tour.

On June 1, 1968, Blood Sweat & Tears (with **Bobby Colomby** on drums) hit number forty-seven on the US charts with their debut record, *Child Is Father To The Man*.

Neil Peart replaces original Rush drummer **John Rutsey** on June 29, 1974.

R&B drummer **Yogi Horton** died on June 8, 1987.

Tito Puente died on June 1, 2000.

Happy Birthday!

Remo Belli: June 22, 1927
Vic Firth: June 2, 1930
James Gadson (R&B great): June 17, 1939
Charlie Watts (The Rolling Stones): June 2, 1941
Bernard Purdie (R&B great): June 11, 1941
Mick Fleetwood (Fleetwood Mac): June 24, 1942
Ian Paice (Deep Purple): June 29, 1948
Frank Beard (ZZ Top): June 11, 1949
Joey Kramer (Aerosmith): June 21, 1950
Bun E. Carlos (Cheap Trick): June 12, 1951
Peter Erskine (jazz great): June 5, 1954
Doane Perry (Jethro Tull): June 16, 1954
Mickey Curry (Bryan Adams): June 10, 1956
Zoro (R&B specialist): June 13, 1962
Steve Shelley (Sonic Youth): June 23, 1962
Eric Kretz (Stone Temple Pilots): June 7, 1966

Terry Chambers

Senses Working Over Time

Twenty years ago, when he walked away from the band that he helped create, drummer Terry Chambers didn't see much future for Brit-pop innovators XTC. Leader Andy Partridge had pulled the plug on live performances, and he and bassist Colin Moulding had written a new batch of material generally unsuited to Chambers' hard-hitting style.

After recording two songs for the follow-up to XTC's seminal album *English Settlement*, Chambers moved to his wife's native Australia and—except for a brief stint with Aussie band Dragon—turned his back on the music industry and the drums.

Now, in a sense, Chambers is back on the drum throne. Still going strong, XTC has recently released a four-CD retrospective of its fifteen-year career with Virgin Records, titled *A Coat Of Many Cupboards*, which showcases his playing. And Chambers' son, Kai, has become a well-known drummer in the Sydney/Newcastle area, most recently with power-pop trio Tone Orange.

Steeped in the burgeoning heavy metal scene of the early 1970s, the self-taught Chambers helped define new wave and pop drumming a decade later through such era-defining songs as "Making Plans For Nigel" and "Senses Working Overtime," aided by studio legends Steve Lillywhite and Hugh Padgham. Chambers' frenetic, punctuated approach to the kit—perfectly suited to early XTC's melodic proto-punk—gradually blossomed as the band's songwriting matured, leading to a sparse, powerful drum sound and approach that remains relevant today.

Now making his living as a construction foreman, Chambers turned his attention to the drums again about five years ago, when Kai asked for lessons. "I warned him about life as a musician, and figured he'd get it out of his system in six months. But it never happened," Chambers says proudly. "I'm glad, because it's created an interest for me."

Does he still play? "I can never get *on* the kit, mate!" he says, laughing. "The only time is if Kai says, 'We need some tuning on these drums, Dad.' But that's okay—everybody's really pleased with what Tone Orange has achieved, and I'm happy to help where I can. It's time to hand over the reins."

Todd Bernhardt

Euphoria Rehearsal Studios, where he introduces them to an array of Paistes, including the one he helped develop, the Traditional medium heavy ride. He rides it with a substantial implement, the Vic Firth 5B—no sense going for half a sound!

"I'm not a chameleon," asserts Ian proudly. "I'm a jazz drummer. I'm intimately aware of time and sound. A jazz education hips people to these things." To that end, Froman has been an associate professor at Berklee for seventeen years, and is on the faculty at Drummers Collective. You've heard about some of his students—Dan Rieser, Jim Black, Adam Deitch, Zach Alford, and Abe Laboriel Jr.

T. Bruce Wittet

T. Bruce Wittet

NEWS

Herman Matthews is on Judith Owen's *Twelve Arrows*.

Steve Slingeneyer is on White Light Motorcade's *Thank You, Good Night!*

Paul Garisto and **Toby Dammit** are on ex–D Generation singer Jesse Malin's *Fine Art Of Self-Destruction*.

Chuck Treece (ex–Bad Brains, Urge Overkill) is on *Sex Sells* by Stiffed. In addition, Chuck is on T.M. Stevens' *Shocka Zooloo*; **Will Calhoun**, **Wolf Simon**, and **Max Weinberg** also appear.

Chad Cromwell is on Mark Selby's *Dirt*.

Camille Gainer is featured on the Joan Jett single "The Word," from the CD *It's About Eve* (*Music For The Cure Of Breast Cancer*).

Gonzo is on Armored Saint's new DVD, *A Trip Through Red Times*.

Donald Edwards swings *The Setup* by altoist Jesse Davis, featuring bassist Ray Drummond.

Gabriel Ramirez is on Concrete Blonde's *Live In Brazil*.

George Fludas is on Doug Lawrence's *Street Wise*.

Danny Pucillo (Julie Andrews, Bill Holman, Peggy Lee) is on his own quartet's *You Know What I Mean*.

Paul Bostaph is on Systematic's *Pleasure To Burn*.

With *1977–2002*, infamous drummer **Bert Switzer** has compiled a collection of his performances over the years with artists like The Destroyed and Monster Island, the latter featuring guitarist Henry Kaiser.

Drew Clark is on Somehow Hollow's debut, *Busted Wings And Rusted Halos*, featuring ex-members of Canada's beloved Grade.

Greg Gall is on the new *Double Dead* live CD by Six Feet Under, featuring ex–Cannibal Corpse lead singer Chris Barnes.

Josh Freese tears it up on The Vandals' live DVD, *Oi To The World!*

Alex Solca

Frank Villardi is on Robert Jackson's *Personal Jesus*.

Mike Burch is on Sonny Landreth's *The Road We're On*.

Matt Krupanski is on Boy Sets Fire's spring release.

Rich Beddoe is on Finger Eleven's new release.

Matt Crum is on the road with The Rocking Horse Winner.

Blackmore's Night's double live CD *Past Times With Good Company* features drummers **Malcolm Of Lumley** as well as **Kevin Dunne** on "16th Century Greensleeves."

Randall Stoll is on K-O's *Exit*.

Benjy Reid is on *Deep Cuts, Fast Remedies* by Snowdogs.

Bob Danielson has renewed his contract with San Francisco's long-running show *Beach Blanket Babylon*. This marks his twelfth year as the principle drummer with the record-breaking theater production.

Nashville drummer **Deen Collier** is now playing for country artist David St. Romain.

Matt Cameron is on a two-legged Pearl Jam tour through the summer.

Congratulations to Vertical Horizon drummer **Ed Toth** and wife Meredith on the birth of their daughter, Emilia

Chuck Comeau is on tour with Simple Plan.

mike malinin
goo goo dolls
on simplicity, murphy's law, and the difference an inch can make

"It seems like nobody plays with two rack toms anymore. Most guys seem to have one rack and two floors. I don't like reaching that far. Two rack toms is more comfortable and having bass mounted toms feels more stable than toms hanging off the cymbal stands. I also prefer traditional toms to power toms, which sit too high when you mount them on a bass drum. I'm a big fan of Matt Cameron. He always used traditional sized toms, even with Soundgarden. He felt that if you know how to tune your drums, you can get every sound you need out of traditional sized drums."

"So for years, I played the traditional 5-pc kit with 8 x 12 and 9 x 13 racks. For whatever reason, I guess simplicity, when I started playing with the Goo Goo Dolls, I went to a 4-pc. The cool thing about a 4-pc kit is that you can get the ride cymbal in really close."

"However, the new album called for more intricate parts and I went back to five drums. I was thinking of using the traditional 8 x 12 again, but now it sounded too small. Then it occurred to me: why not just go with a 9 x 12. Just that extra inch added more power. I was worried about not getting enough tonal separation between a 9 x 12 and 9 x 13, but that's not a problem."

"I first played a traditional 14 x 22 kick. When I got a 16 x 22, I thought it was huge. Just a couple of years ago I made the jump to an 18 x 22. I'm amazed that you can get that much more thump out of that extra two inches. It's crazy, but if you put a 16 x 22 next to an 18 x 22, there's a world of difference."

"I've always returned to where I started from, the traditional 5-pc kit. That simplicity just feels the most natural to me. Even with my hardware situation, I stay simple. It's like Murphy's law: if something can go wrong, it will so the less things you have to mess with, the less things that can go wrong."

mike's starclassic maple kit

finish: white silk

drums: 18X22 bd, 9X12 tt, 9X13 tt, 16X16 ft, 6.5X14 maple snare

throne: ht530

pedal: hp900r

hi-hat stand: hh905

www.tama.com

For the new Tama Drum & Hardware catalog, send $3.00 to: Tama Dept. MD25, P.O. Box 886, Bensalem, PA 19020, or P.O. Box 2009, Idaho Falls, ID 83403

MD's 2003 Product

It's All Abo

Gearheads, here we go again! For the fourth straight year, *MD* is presenting a major pictorial dedicated exclusively to the instruments and equipment that we drummers dream about and drool over. The latest drums, cymbals, percussion, hardware, heads, sticks, electronics…they're all here. So without further ado, let's get to the goodies!

EXTRAVAGANZA

u t T h e G e a r !

Drum Workshop

New finishes on DW's Collector's Series kits include Broken Glass (shown here), Tangerine Sparkle, and Chrome. Drummer's Choice snare drum models from Sheila E., Chad Wackerman, Brian Tichy, and Abe Laboriel Jr. are also new, along with Carbon Fiber (inset) and Black Brass Workshop Series snares.

DW's new 9500 hi-hat features double eccentric-cam drive and technology derived from the 9000 series bass drum pedals. **(805) 499-6999, www.dwdrums.com.**

Evans

Evans' Min-EMAD system removes overtones by controlling the vibration of the drumhead. A fabric "bridge" links the resonant head with the relatively inert metal counterhoop. The amount of overtone reduction is adjustable by means of where the Min-EMAD is attached to the head.

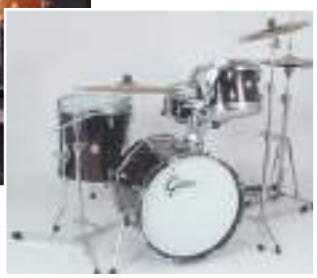
The new J1 head features a special etched finish said to provide "a superb surface for brush sweeps" and "a new dimension in open tones for snare and toms." With an ambient tone and noticeably attenuated attack, the J1 is "the perfect middle ground between clear and coated heads for jazz or rock." **(800) 323-2746, www.evansdrumheads.com.**

Gretsch

Gretsch is now making vintage-style **Leedy** snare drums. (Gretsch owns the Leedy brand name.) The drums, faithfully replicated to original specs, are available in three models, with more to come.

Meanwhile, Gretsch drumkits (distributed by **Kaman**) include the limited-edition 120th Anniversary Bebop kit shown here, along with Renown Maple, Catalina, and Blackhawk models.

(860) 509-8888, www.kamanmusic.com.
(912) 748-7070, www.gretsch.com.



Latin Percussion

Among LP's new products are Brushed Nickel Timbales in the mid-price Matador line. The dark finish and gold hardware give depth to the appearance, yet the finish will take repeated cascara (side shell playing) without scarring. Drums are available in 10"/12" and 14"/15" pairs, complete with a black cowbell with holder, a pair of timbale sticks, and a heavy-duty adjustable chrome stand.

Accents Armando Peraza Signature Series congas and bongos are finished in a tribal fire motif that befits "the dignity, ceaseless energy, and power" of their namesake. The graphics are molded into the shell, and the drums are dressed with polished gold hardware. The 30"-tall congas have the same profile as LP's Patato fiberglass congas for crisp slaps, round mid frequencies, and deep bass tones. Matching bongos offer projection and bright pitch.

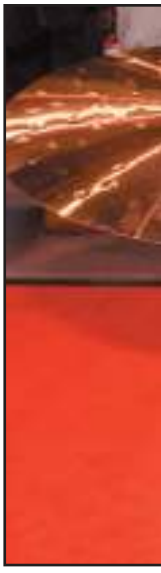
Finally, LP's new World Beat Plenera Drums are made of a colorful, lightweight, and durable synthetic material that will hold its shape and withstand the elements for "street" playing. They're fully tunable (wrench provided), are available in 8" Requinto, 10" Segundo, and 12" Seguidor sizes, and nestle into a handsome black case. **(973) 478-6903, www.lpmusic.com.**

Ludwig

Ludwig has expanded its Accent Custom value-priced kits with add-on bass drums and toms, along with the availability of the Planet Z cymbal package (at additional cost). The drums (including the snare) feature juniper/mahogany shells, and are available in three natural finishes. Evans G2 tom heads, G1 snare heads, and EQ4 bass drum heads are now standard. **(219) 522-1675, www.ludwig-drums.com.**

Mapex

This Saturn Pro kit from Mapex displays their new Twilight Stardust natural fade finish. The drumshells feature a two-ply exotic walnut "inner shell" (for warmth and depth) within a four-ply maple "outer shell" (for edge and clarity). **(615) 793-2050, www.mapexdrums.com.**



Meinl

Wood and fiberglass djembes—in key- and rope-tuned versions—are just a part of Meinl's extensive hand and ethnic percussion line.

Meinl's MCS (Meinl Cymbal Set-Up) entry-level pre-packs contain a ride/crash/hi-hat combo that offers acoustic quality and value. **(877) 886-3465, www.meinl.de.**

Paiste

Seven new cymbal models—four rides, two crashes, and one hi-hat—have been added to Paiste's Dimensions line. They feature the company's "Sonic Texture Formula" manual surface treatment, said to bring out intricate harmonics for a fuller, more complex sound. Paiste has also completely overhauled the features and pricing structure of its budget lines.

Additionally, Paiste and drum builder Jeff Ocheltree have once again joined forces to create S-Bronze snare drums, with shells made from recycled Signature series cymbals. The drums feature gold-plated die-cast hoops, polished brass lugs (engraved with the Signature "P" design), and high-quality snare wires and throw-offs.

Pearl

Pearl's Masters RetroSpec (MSX) drums feature attractive covered finishes over Masters Series maple shells. The Royal Gold (**A**), White Marine Pearl, Abalone, and Vintage Red Onyx finishes are designed to make the MSX kits "tour ready" in terms of sound and durability.

Pearl's new Sound Check kit (**B**) offers features unheard of in "beginner" kits. They include heavy-duty double-braced hardware, 9-ply Mahogany shells, and a chain-drive bass drum pedal. The five-piece kit is available in a high-gloss black covered finish.

The company also introduced new wood and metal Firecracker "auxiliary" snare drums (**C**) for the drummer on a budget. The eight-lug drums are available in 5x10 and 5x12 sizes, with steel or 8-ply poplar shells.

New items from Pearl Percussion include (**D**) the PBL-20 Clave Block (for use with sticks or pedals), PTA-30 handle-mounted Tri-Agogo Bells (**E**), and a new Elite brass-shell timbale set (**F**) that combines 14" and 15" drums with a tilting timbale stand. Also new are four additional sizes of Bala Cowbells and two sizes of Ash Tone Blocks.

(615) 833-4477, www.pearldrum.com.

Premier

Premier has reconfigured their entire line of drums, mallet percussion, and orchestral percussion in a major design and marketing effort. The high-end drumkit line (shown here) is now called simply the Premier series. It offers maple, birch, or Gen-X (combination) shells, with or without reinforcing hoops (except the Gen-X shells). The drums are fitted with ultra-streamlined hand-polished lugs (with integrated plinths and anti-rattle nut retainers) and die-cast claw hooks. Totally redesigned xylophones, vibes, and marimbas, along with Hosbilt free-floating pipe-band drums, are also new to the line.

(856) 231-8825, www.premier-percussion.com.

Pro-Mark

Pro-Mark's marching line now includes (upper photo, from top) Matt Savage signature snare drum sticks, Americorps TS1 and TS2 tenor sticks, and mallets for marimbas and vibes. Also new are (lower photo, from top) the FunkBat drumset stick, Stefon Harris signature vibes mallets, and a rod-style bass drum beater. Also new from the company are eye-catching "wearable drumkeys."

(877) 776-6275, www.promark-stix.com.

Regal Tip

Regal Tip has re-launched their Eric Carr signature model, as a tribute to the former KISS drummer. They've also introduced six models of their x-series sticks, shown here in a counter-top display.
(716) 285-3546, www.regaltip.com.

Remo

Remo's professional drumkit line has been completely redesigned and reintroduced as the Gold Crown series (**A**). The drums feature Remo's upgraded Advanced Acousticon shells, 6300 Series hardware, and either black, white marine pearl, or new Bronze metalized finishes. Kits are currently available in three jazz-oriented configurations.

Remo has also re-released the Tombek drumset-mountable key-tuned djembe/tom (**B**), owing to demand generated by Dave Weckl's extensive use of the drum.

Remo's world percussion line now features two new Alessandra Belloni drums. The 2½x16 "Black Madonna Of Monserrat" tambourine (**C**) offers the acoustic character of the Sicilian-style Tammorra coupled with the vibrant sound of its nine sets of jingles. The Yemeja frame drum has "the deep full sound of a gentle sea," owing to a Remo Pocket Shake attached to the underside of the drum.

New Emperor X drumheads (**D**) are designed for the heaviest of heavy hitters. The 13" and 14" coated snare batters feature two 10-mil plies of Ambassador-weight film bonded with a "virtually indestructible" 5-mil Black Dot on top. It's the thickest snare head Remo has ever made, yet it's said to offer "excellent sensitivity and response characteristics."
(661) 294-5600, www.remo.com.

Roland

New electronic percussion products from Roland include the heavy-duty RT-5S Snare Trigger (right), RT-7K Kick Trigger, and RT-3T Tom Trigger. The snare and kick triggers feature sensor technology borrowed from Roland's V-Pads. The RT-5S supports separate head/rim triggering and works with acoustic and mesh heads.

The PCK-1 Practice Conversion Kit (a 14" mesh head, an RT-5S Snare Trigger, and a rim silencer, below) can turn any acoustic snare into a silent practice pad. The RT-5S can trigger MIDI modules (when used with the optional TMC-6 Trigger MIDI Converter), a TD-Series brain, or Roland's RM-2 Rhythm Coach.

Finally, the SPD-S Sampling Pad (below right) features CD-quality sampling, preset sounds, and onboard effects. Six pads and three edge triggers enable drummers to play up to eight sounds at a time, using 120 preset or 200 user-sampled waveforms. Drummers can even create their own loops with the resampling function and pattern sequencer.

(323) 890-3700, www.rolandus.com.

Sabian

Sabian's new XS20 series offers B20 "cast" bronze cymbals at low "sheet" bronze prices. The cymbals, designed for the entry-level/student player, are said to be "pitched on the bright side of mid, relatively open and free." The series includes hi-hats, splashes, crashes, rides, and Chinese models, and includes Rock weights for heavier players. Performance Sets and Effects Packs are also available.

Sabian AA Metal X cymbals are for drummers seeking loud, penetrating cymbals that aren't thick, heavy, and "plate-y" sounding. New design technology gives the cymbals projection power without excessive weight or thickness.

Finally, Sabian has purchased the Camber entry-level brand, and will be manufacturing and selling all Camber models.

(506) 272-2019, www.sabian.com.

Sonor

Sonor offers the eye-catching new Tattoo Designer Series finish shown below. New finishes are also available in the S-Class Pro series, along with a white sparkle finish in the upgraded Force 3003 series. (All Force models have been upgraded, and their names now reflect the new year: 3003, 2003, and 1003.) The company also officially debuted their Latin and Afro-style percussion lines, along with a new sub-entry-level drumkit called the 503 series (left).

(804) 515-1900, www.hohnerusa.com.

Toca

Toca's Limited Edition Burl Oak congas and bongos are complemented by gold-tone plated hardware. Congas are 30" tall and available in 11", 11¾", and 12½" diameters. Each shell is constructed of Asian oak shaped to an Afro-Cuban design, and all drums are outfitted with Toca's EasyPlay hoops and four-bolt tension plates.

Also new are Pete Escovedo Signature Timbales, with 14" and 15" chromed steel shells and brass-plated hoops and hardware. Each set includes a Gibraltar timbale stand with heavy cowbell mount and molded support block, a Toca large Rumba bell, and a Limited Edition Pete Escovedo Signature badge.

(860) 509-8888, www.kamanmusic.com.

Tama

Tama's Starclassic Performer and Performer EFX birch drumsets (right) now offer Accel Driver configurations, which combine the quick response of Accel-sized rack toms (8x10 and 9x12) with the deeper sounds of a 16x16 floor tom and an extra-deep 18x22 bass drum. The bass drum features a new tom mount that can be adjusted back and forth in six different positions (at 15-mm increments). The 5½x14 snare drums feature new strainers and butts with improved stability and sensitivity. Air Pocket rubber tom feet absorb shock, while new die-cast claw hooks protect the bass drum hoops.

Tama's first "mini" drumkit—the Stagestar (below)—features a 12x14 bass drum, 8x10 and 8x12 toms, a 12x14 floor tom, and a 5x13 snare drum. Appropriate hardware, 13" hi-hats, and a 16" crash cymbal are included. The compact kit features Swingstar-quality shells, and is recommended as a practice kit, a beginner kit for smaller drummers, or a gigging kit for "stages originally designed for one accordion player."

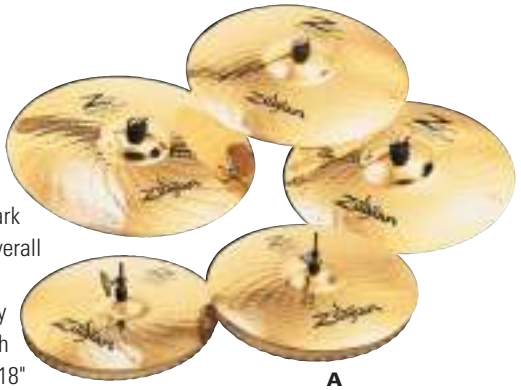
Finally, Rockstar Custom sets are now available in limited-edition classic White Marine Pearl, Black Marine Pearl, and Silver Sparkle Duracover finishes.

(215) 638-8670, www.tama.com.

Zildjian

New models in Zildjian's Z Custom series (**A**) include 18" and 19" heavy Projection Crashes, a 20" Medium Crash, and 14" and 15" medium-heavy and heavy Mastersound Hi-Hats. The new crashes are said to be the loudest cymbals that Zildjian has ever created. The hi-hats extend Zildjian's trademark Mastersound design to the Z Custom range for a clean, fast, clear "chick" sound and "extremely loud" overall performance.

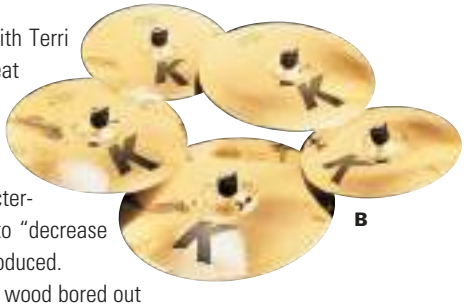
Zildjian's K Custom cymbals are designed to provide more clarity with a quicker attack and faster decay than traditional K Zildjians. New K Custom Fast Crashes (**B**) (designed with Dennis Chambers) offer a crash sound that speaks quickly yet is still dark and full bodied. Models are available in 14", 15", 16", 17", and 18" sizes.



A

Also new to the K Custom line is the High Definition Ride (**C**), developed in conjunction with Terri Lyne Carrington. Available in a 22" size, the High Definition Ride is a versatile cymbal with great definition and plenty of tone, applicable to both electric and acoustic situations.

Zildjian has re-introduced their Cymbal Alloy snare drum (**D**), designed by Bob Gatzen and manufactured in conjunction with Noble & Cooley. The 4¾x14 8-lug drums feature an exclusive "Groove Tone" process that is applied to the shell for durability and unique acoustic characteristics. The drums also include a "minimal mass/staggered" nodal-mounted lug system said to "decrease and equalize pressure placed against the shell structure." A limited run of 500 drums will be produced.



B

In a new approach to drumstick design, Zildjian's Anti-Vibe stick (**E**) has a certain amount of wood bored out of its butt end. The resulting shaft is then filled with a rubber insert that absorbs much of the impact shock that would otherwise travel through the stick to the player's hand.

Zildjian's new backpack-style cymbal bag (**F**) holds cymbals up to 22". The main compartment features three dividers for easy organization. The external hi-hat pocket can hold cymbals up to 15". A second pocket accommodates drumkeys or personnel effects. The bag features padded shoulder straps, a soft carrying handle, and a climbing-style "D" carabiner for attaching stick bags or other items.
(781) 871-2200, www.zildjian.com.

C

D

E

F

Vic Firth

Vic Firth offers a new series of practice pads, including the single-sided double-surface model shown here. Also new are signature drumsticks for (from left top) Wuv, Gerald Heyward, Paulinho Da Costa (timbale stick), Lee Beddis (Corpsmaster marching stick), Danny Carey, and John Dolmayan.
(781) 326-3455, www.vicfirth.com.

Vater

Vater has introduced new Players Design drumstick models from David Silveria (the DSK) and Morgan Rose (the Alien Freak). David's stick measures 17" long and is just under a 5B in diameter, for a powerful "throw." Morgan's model is a double-butt-ended stick made of extra-dense "dark" hickory, with no finish or lacquer, for extra grip and power.

Vater has also debuted two new drumstick holders designed to clamp conveniently to any stand. **(781) 767-1877, www.vater.com.**

A

B

D

C

Yamaha

Yamaha's Maple, Birch, and Beech Custom Absolute drums (**A**) let drummers mix and match different wood types to customize the appearance and tonal characteristics of their kits. Rack and floor toms are now available in "Universal" dimensions, and all snare drums and toms feature aluminum die-cast hoops. Bass drums feature a new spur with a larger-diameter leg, as well as die-cast claw hooks with tension-rod inserts that make changing heads easier. A new quick-release Nouveau lug (**B**) is also an option on all Absolute drums. Nineteen custom and eleven "core" colors are now available.

New to Yamaha's marching line are 8200 series drums (**C**). The toms and bass drums are equipped with birch shells, improved tuning mechanisms, and the first lug casing in Yamaha history developed strictly for marching drums. The drums are lighter than any competition-level drums on the market.

Yamaha also has a new line of carriers (**D**), designed by Randy May. They feature a 6-point adjustment system for fit and comfort, as well as aluminum tubing, carbon-fiber belly plates, and magnesium shoulder supports for extremely low weight. **(714) 522-9011, www.yamahadrums.com.**

Alchemy

Alchemy's A.R.T. (Alchemy Radial Technology) mid-price cymbals (manufactured by Istanbul Agop) are the first B8 cymbals made by a Turkish company. They're only offered in this box set, containing 14" hi-hats, a 16" crash, and a 20" ride. **(201) 599-0100, www.drstrings.com, www.istanbulcymbals.com.**

Aquarian

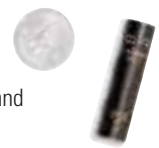
Aquarian sells their drumheads from a rack that features a usage guide to help you find the right model for your needs. **(714) 632-0230, www.aquariandrumheads.com.**

Audio-Technica

Audio-Technica calls their new AE2500 "the ultimate kick-drum mic'." Separate dynamic and condenser elements within the same housing are positioned in a perfect phase relationship in order to capture the aggressive attack of the beater and the round tonalities of the shell. The mic' comes with the AT8471 isolation clamp. **(330) 686-2600, www.audio-technica.com.**

Audix

The ultra-miniature M1245 and M1290 mic's from Audix are the world's smallest condenser mic's with integrated pre-amps and detachable cables. They're recommended for acoustic percussion instruments, overheads, and room-miking applications. **(800) 966-8261, www.audixusa.com.**



Bosphorus

The Versa series (left, designed in conjunction with Ignacio Berroa), and the Gold series (intended for pop and rock applications) are the latest offerings from Bosphorus Cymbals. **(770) 205-0552, www.bosphoruscymbals.com.**

Brady

Along with their distinctive range of block- and ply-shell snare drums, Brady offers custom-made drumkits like this Turtleback Satin jarrah ply set. **(011) 61-8-9497 2212, www.bradydrums.com.**

Cadeson

This mid-price Stadium LX kit from Cadeson comes complete with hardware, throne, and cymbals. In addition, the company now offers buyers their own choice of drumheads on high-end kits. **(626) 369-0253, www.cadesonmusic.com.**

Canopus

This hybrid kit from Canopus displays the company's lacquer-finished Studio kit series, new melodic single-headed toms, and aluminum snare drum. **(011) 81-3-3325-4462, www.canopusdrums.com.**

Drum Solo

Custom-crafted stave-shell snare drums made of exotic woods and featuring unique finishes are the specialty of Drum Solo. **(415) 898-2647, www.drumsolo.cc.**

Duallist

The Duallist double-action single pedal has been adapted with a left-foot-operated "slave" pedal and beater—thus creating a totally functional *triple* pedal. A "standard" single-action pedal has also been introduced to the line. **(323) 417-4964, www.theduallist.com.**

Dunnett Classic Snares

This distinctive stainless-steel kit is a one-off from Dunnett Classic Snares. It's fitted with Masterworks cymbals, a new Turkish-made line that Dunnett is distributing in North America. **(604) 643-9939, www.dunnett.com.**

Fibes

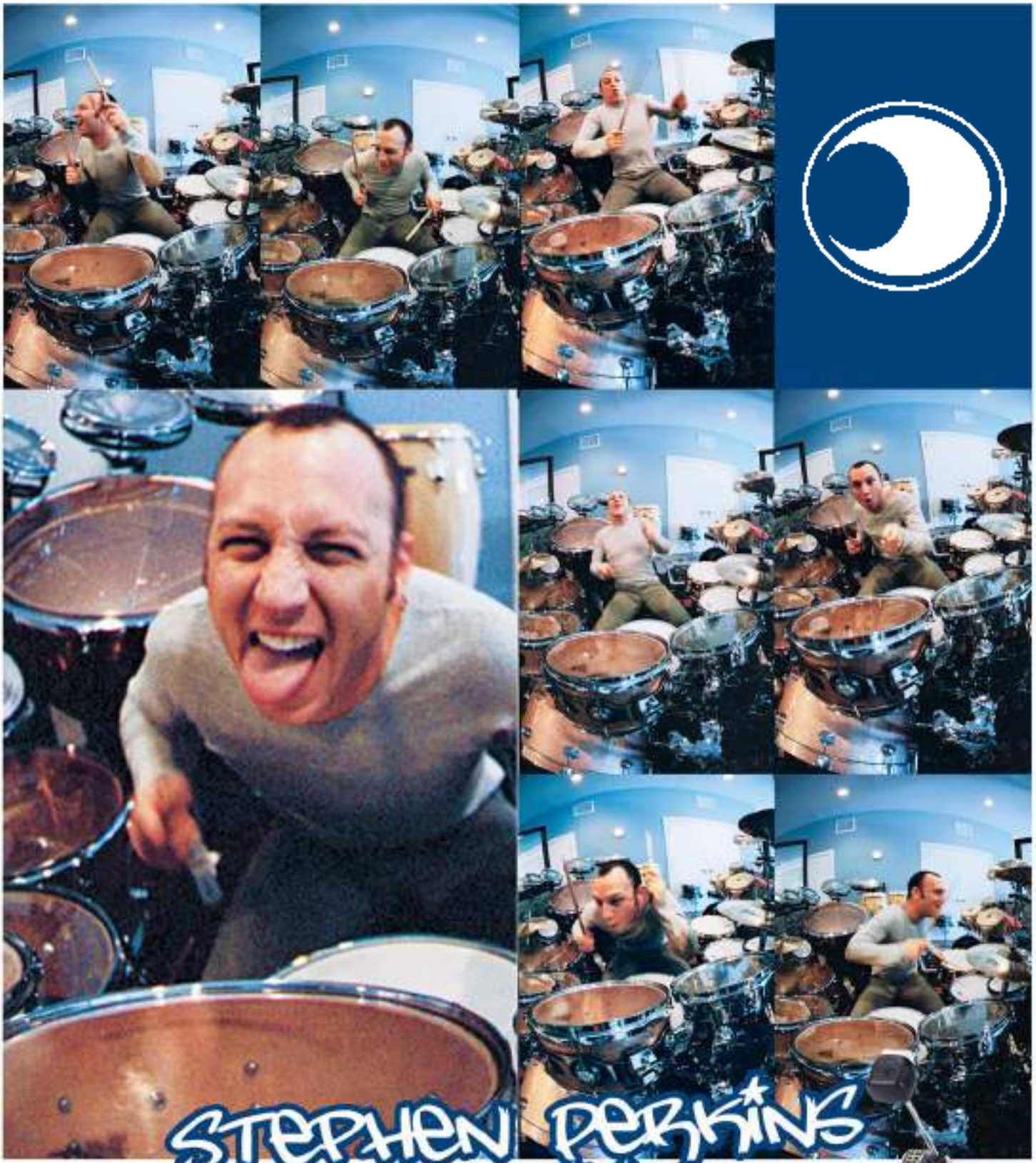
Fibes offers this smoky/clear acrylic set in their Crystalite series. They've also announced that they are now making their own maple shells for their wood drum line. **(512) 416-9955, www.fibes.com.**

GMS

This enormous display kit from GMS showcases their Special Edition series, with drums finished in eucalyptus, curly maple, and tamo veneers. The company has also introduced a new mid-priced CL series made in cooperation with an overseas manufacturer. **(631) 293-4235, www.gmsdrums.com.**

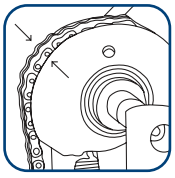
Istanbul Agop

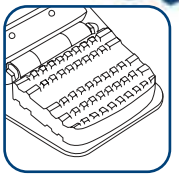
Distinctive-sounding China Pangs in 16", 18", and 20" sizes are new to the Istanbul Agop line. The company has also introduced a traditional 20" Swish model with rivets. **(201) 599-0100, www.drstrings.com, www.istanbulcymbals.com.**

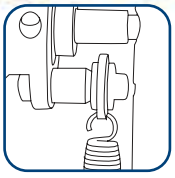


STEPHEN PERKINS

JANE'S ADDICTION







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INFINITE TORQUE ADJUSTMENT
FLOATING SPRING ASSEMBLY
DELTA PLUS MULTI-BEARING SYSTEM

STEPHEN PERKINS PLAYS THE
DW 9002 DOUBLE BASS DRUM PEDAL

PEDAL SPECIALISTS: STEPHEN PERKINS, DRUM WORKSHOP AND YOUR LOCAL DW DEALER

Istanbul Mehmet

Istanbul Mehmet offers a new series called Marmara, in two versions. Emirhan models are only lathed and polished on their outer edges. Onurhan models feature unlathed bells and edges, with lathed and polished "shoulders." Each version has a distinctive sound. **(330) 482-5750, www.universalpercussion.com, www.istanbulmehmet.com.**

Maryland Drums

This DC Series kit from Maryland Drums features a Mint Green Vintage wrap finish. Snare drums in wood and metal are also a specialty of the company. **(410) 584-2539, www.marylanddrum.com.**

Mountain Rythym

Wood-topped bongo cajons (inset) and djembe cajons have been added to Mountain Rythym's line of "traditional" skin-headed djembes, congas, frame drums, and timbales. The company also offers custom snare drums with stave shells. **(905) 764-6543, www.mountainrythym.com.**

Noble & Cooley

Noble & Cooley offers their CD Maple drumkit in a new sunburst finish. The company is also creating the shells for Zildjian's new Cymbal Alloy snare drum. **(413) 357-6321, www.noblecooley.com.**

Orange County Drum & Percussion

The drum on the left features a blue bell-brass outer shell and a maple dual-internal-chamber inner shell. The drum on the right has an acrylic outer shell and a maple inner shell. They're just two examples of the experimental nature of Orange County Drum & Percussion. **(714) 564-0667, www.ocdrum.com.**

Peace Drums

This impressive assembly from Peace Drums illustrates the company's intention to be a major player in the full-range drum market. The company catalogs eleven series of drumkits, along with dozens of snare drums, pedals, and accessories. Marching drums and percussion are also offered. **(626) 581-4510, www.peacemusic.com.tw.**

Pork Pie

Pork Pie's Bill Detamore takes a light-hearted approach to custom finishes, like this colorful polka-dot kit. But he's very serious about drum building. His line now includes solid snare drums in maple, hickory, and mahogany. **(818) 992-0783, www.porkpiedrums.com.**

Rhythm Tech

Pete Englehart metal percussion instruments are offered by Rhythm Tech. The company has also introduced glow-in-the-dark Moonblock percussion blocks. **(914) 636-6900, www.rhythmtech.com.**

Rocket Shells

Along with custom sizes and shells that feature unique artwork, Rocket Shells carbon-fiber drums can now be ordered with factory-installed May internal microphones. **(916) 334-2234, www.rocketshells.com.**

RMV Drums

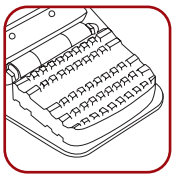
Brazil's RMV Drums is making inroads in the US market with their drums made from exotic Brazilian woods. The drums are fitted with RMV's own line of Duo and Avant drumheads. The company also offers a wide range of exotic-wood and aluminum-shell snare drums. **(011) 55 11 9385-1265, www.rmv.com.br.**

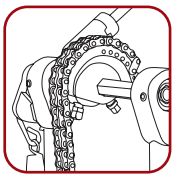
Shure

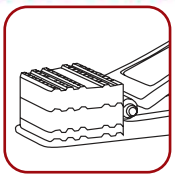
Ultra-light construction and supercardioid acoustic performance should help Shure's new Beta 54 headworn condenser vocal mic' appeal to drummers who sing from behind the kit. A low-output cartridge enables the mic' to handle extremely high sound pressure levels. It's offered in black or tan, with a windscreen, detachable boom mount, and flexible, fully adjustable headband. **(847) 866-2200, www.shure.com.**

Smith Custom Drums

This kit from Smith Custom Drums features a 20x24 bass drum and blue Satin Flame finish. The company also offers an instructional video featuring Robin DiMaggio. **(203) 696-1290, www.smithcustomdrums.com.**







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Sol Drums & Percussion

Sol Drums & Percussion's heavy-duty Bata Stand holds three bata drums at once. The stand can suspend the drums in a position that gives the player the flexibility to hit all six heads in succession. The configuration is fully adjustable for different drum sizes and brands as well as for the preferences of each player.

Sol's Talking Shaker is a small wooden cylinder containing metal pellets and covered with skin on each end. The pellets can be shaken directly from head to head or from shell to shell, or swirled to generate unlimited variety from both. The skin can be squeezed to tighten, loosen, and otherwise modulate the sound. **(415) 468-4700, www.soldrums.com.**

Spaun

The Split Snare from Spaun features a 1" space in the center of the drum for greater air escape. This is said to result in more volume and projection, as well as extremely sensitive snare response. The drum is available in a variety of multi-ply shell configurations and in all Spaun custom finishes. **(909) 971-7761, www.spaundrums.com.**

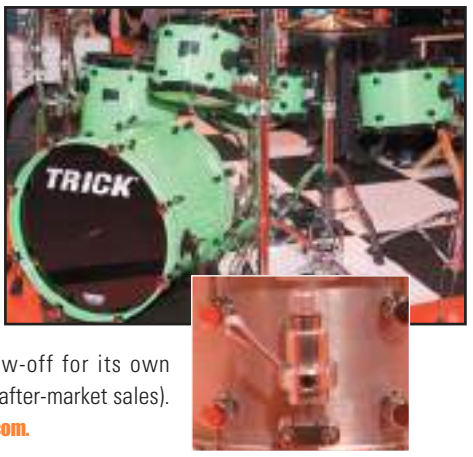
Sunlite

Sunlite stresses the value of their upgraded Top Gun drumkit series. It features 9-ply basswood shells, a new snare throw-off, a new lug isolation system, and six lacquer finishes (including the dark pink shown here). The company has also upgraded their BP95N double bass drum pedal. **(626) 448-8018, www.sunlitedrum.com.**

Taye

The Taye GoKit is a compact drumkit available in several different configurations. It includes a 7½x18 bass drum, a 4x13 snare, and toms ranging from 5x8 to 6x12. An optional 3½x10 mountable stainless-steel timbale is available. Other timbale sizes, as well as stainless-steel snare drums, are also available. **(909) 628-9589, www.taye.com.**

Trick Percussion



Trick Percussion has expanded their Radial Pressure Management design from snare drums to complete drumkits. This striking kit features Trick's unique aluminum shells. The company also has introduced a high-tech, all-aluminum Helical Groove Throw-off for its own snare drums (and possibly for after-market sales). **(847) 519-9911, www.trickdrums.com.**

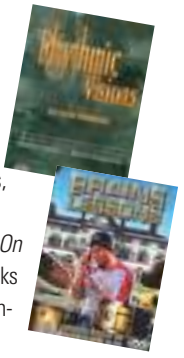
Turkish Cymbals

Along with a new Jazz series that features special hammering for "an old Turkish sound," Turkish Cymbals has introduced another series called Sumela. With lathed bells and edges and raw "shoulders," the cymbals are said to have "a soft feel, and a dry, tightly controlled yet warm and shimmering sound." **(011) 90 212 292 1886, www.turkishcymbals.com.**

UFIP

UFIP cymbals are hand-made in Italy. They're the only cast alloy cymbals that do not have hydraulically stamped-in bells. The roto-casting process used to make UFIP cymbals gives them unique musical qualities. **(514) 488-9564, www.ufip.com.**

Warner Bros.



Warner Bros. Publications offers *Rhythmic Visions*, a DVD that provides an in-depth look at the complete *Rhythmic Illusions* concept by Gavin Harrison. It features five full-length performances, alternative audio mixes with and without click tracks, and on-screen notation.

Also from Warner Bros. is *Brain's Lessons: Shredding Repis On The Gnar Gnar Rad* by Brian "Brain" Mantia. The drummer breaks down go-go, funk patterns, the ostinato, and the up-down technique. **(800) 327-7643, www.warnerbrospublications.com.**

Wuhan

After making an impact on the cymbal market with Western-style cymbals over the past couple of years, Wuhan is now enjoying a resurgence in demand for original, authentic Chinese cymbals—including the 27" monster at the lower left. **(330) 482-5750, www.universalpercussion.com.**

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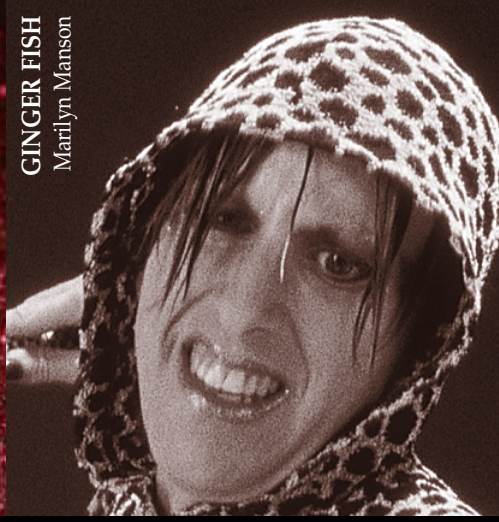

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Marilyn Manson

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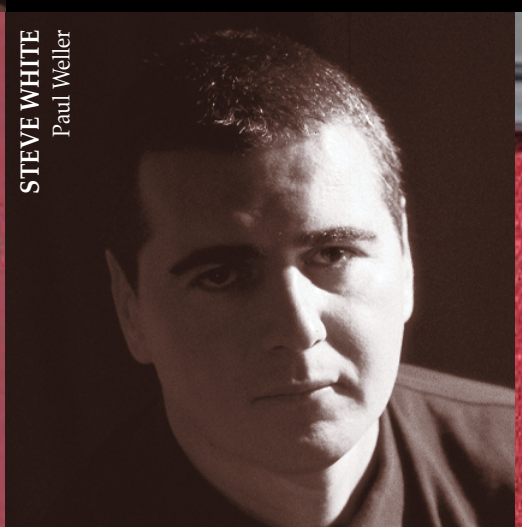
To compliment theses great sounding shells Premier created a bold new look with Diamond Chrome tension casings boasting individual style along with sleek insulated die-cast claw hooks. Premier's innovative variation of the classic ISO mounting system enables a more versatile set-up and mounts by way of a newly engineered tom bracket with hide-away memory lock. 29 finishes are available ranging from cool wraps to classic lacquers and satins, or legendary high gloss sparkles.



STEVE WHITE
Paul Weller

Of Special Interest

Ace Products

Ace Products is making life easier for hand drummers with their new Kaces conga bag, which is available with or without wheels. It loads head-down for extra stability, and it wheels upright for easy handling. **(415) 492-9600, www.aceproducts.com.**

Ahead

The newest drumstick from Ahead is a signature model from Matt "Spüg" McDonough of Mudvayne. **(818) 727-1127, www.bigbangdist.com.**

Anderson International Trading

New birch (as well as maple) shells from Keller can be ordered in small quantities for do-it-yourself drumkit builders from Anderson International Trading. **(714) 666-8183, www.aitwood.com.**

Basix

The low- to mid-price Basix line has been augmented this year by a Bernard Purdie signature kit featuring special colors and 24-karat gold-plated hardware. The list price of $3,000 brings Basix into the custom drum arena. **(847) 498-9850, lgoldstein@westheimercorp.com.**

The Bearing Edge

The Bearing Edge offers a wide variety of exotic woods and finishes. This bubinga kit features olive ash burl wood hoops. **(770) 967-9213, www.bearingedge.com.**

Beato

Beato bags trade heavily on their quality as a totally American-made product. **(310) 532-2671, www.beatobags.com.**

BeyerDynamic

The Opus 99 bass drum mic' from BeyerDynamic can be mounted on an easily placeable, low-profile floor stand. The Opus 87 Mark II condenser mic' for snares and toms includes a spring-loaded clamp mount. **(516) 293-3200, www.beyerdynamic.de.**

Blue Microphones

Blue Microphones are primarily known for extremely high-tech (and artfully designed) studio mic's. They've brought that reputation to live-miking applications with the Ball mic'. It's said to be the world's first phantom-powered dynamic mic', producing condenser fidelity with dynamic ruggedness and high SPL capacity. **(805) 370-1599, www.bluemic.com.**

Cleveland Musical Instruments

Besides their high-end Clevelander snare drums, Cleveland Musical Instruments now offers Phrogg Percussion Student Series snare drums (left), Clevelander II snare drum kits (right), and Brazilian-made Orion cymbals. **(216) 391-1234, www.cmigroup.org.**

Contemporanea

This exotic "drumkit" features a wide variety of authentic Brazilian percussion instruments from Contemporanea. The company also offers dozens of authentic "samba whistles" made from 100-year-old Brazilian rosewood. **(940) 458-7267, www.brazildrums.com.**

Humes & Berg

From Humes & Berg's Enduro line comes this rolling bass drum case, designed with an extendable handle. It's long enough to support cases for a floor tom and a snare drum all in one trip. **(219) 397-1980, www.humes-berg.com.**

Innovation Drums

Titanium drums and striking custom graphics are specialties of Innovation Drums. The kit shown here is from Rikki Rockett's most recent tour with Poison. **(937) 512-3786, www.innovationdrums.com.**

Maxtone

Maxtone has long been known as a "budget" drum brand. But this new Pro Series snare drum with wood hoops displays qualities that justify its name. **(011) 886 4 2313 0174, www.maxtone.com.tw.**

The Overseas Connection

Kangaba African djembes, named for the village in Mali in which they're made, are specially imported by The Overseas Connection. The company also brings in other instruments from Africa, including a full line of Rhythm Kids percussion items targeted at the children's market. **(303) 465-9585, www.overseasconnection.com.**

Rhythm Fusion

Rhythm Fusion carries authentic world percussion instruments, like this 22" gong and ornate gong stand. **(831) 426-7975, www.rhythmfusion.com.**

Puresound Percussion

Puresound Percussion's Blasters snare wires are for high-volume, high-intensity playing. The company is also now offering Speedball self-aligning bass drum beaters. They feature a swiveling head, three choices of striking surface, and adjustable shaft weights to customize the "feel" of the beater's throw.

(310) 966-1176, www.puresoundpercussion.com.

Rhythms

From left: The Cuba-Cajon combination kalimba/cajon, oh-gene giant bells, a natural bamboo slit drum (at top), and "the world's largest udu drum" are among the exotic African instruments offered by Rhythms Exotic Afro Percussions. **(408) 246-1002, www.afrorhythms.com.**

Roc-N-Soc

Well known for their cloth-covered drum seats, Roc-N-Soc has now introduced vinyl-covered saddle-shaped seats for any of its throne models. A Lunar model throne with the new vinyl seat is shown here. **(828) 452-1736, www.rocnsoc.com.**

Rock 'N' Roller

The versatile Rock 'N' Roller multi-cart series has been totally redesigned and improved. The carts, which are ideal for moving large amounts of gear, are now being distributed by J. D'Addario. **(631) 439-3300, www.rocknroller-cart.com.**

Stagg

Stagg drums and cymbals are manufactured in mainland China. They're distributed by Belgian-based EMD, a major European distributor who recently opened a US operation. The products offer surprisingly good quality at equally surprising prices. **(886) 871-5800, www.emdmusic.com.**

SKB

This large trap case is part of SKB's Roto-X case series. It features a removable tray for pedal storage, sticks, and hardware, as well as molded receptacles for a drumkey and a beverage container. A drum throne can be secured into the lid with the provided bungee cord. Built-in 4" wheels, rear stair glides, and interior securing straps are standard.

Also available is a scaled-down version called the TPX2 Small Kit Trap Case. The top-loading case has four pads that will hold up to six cymbals, along with carpeted storage for a snare drum. It features a removable lid, a lift-off hardware tray, Sure Grip handles for easy lifting and transport, four casters with brakes, a high-tension slide release buckle, and heavy-duty web straps. **(714) 637-1252, www.skbcases.com.**

Timba

Percussion

Timba Percussion makes its Cuban-style congas, bongos, tamborims, and bata drums out of materials guaranteed to have been grown or manufactured in the US. Red Appalachian oak and cherry woods are standard, others are available on request. Sixteen hand-rubbed finishes are offered. **(909) 727-8932, www.timbapercussion.com.**

Truth Custom Drums

Acrylic kits with colorful hardware, along

continued on page 52

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continued from page 49

And What's More

Alfred Publishing offers aspiring percussionists Kalani's *All About Jembe*, while drummers can benefit from Jay Wanamaker's *Drum Tuning Made Easy*. Both are available from your favorite music retailer.

Auralex Acoustics has introduced a complete line of drumkit and room soundproofing and isolation products. The line includes isolation platforms, floor mats, and stage monitor wedges. The company also offers a free online consumer research tool to help users find appropriate products. **(303) 412-2600, www.auralex.com.**

Why should guitar players have all the fun? Now drummers can, too, with **Authentic Accents & Design**'s "memory boards" for precise placement of bass drum and hi-hat pedals. Large and small models are available, along with a version that accommodates a snare-stand holder. **(410) 695-2169, wag1027@msn.com.**

High-tech **Axis** pedals are now available in XL Specialty Percussion's Protechtion Case line. It can be configured with wheels in several versions to facilitate convenient pick-up. Heritage Series drumsticks and percussion mallets, new from **Cappella**. **(609) 448-1512, www.cappelladrumsticks.com.**

Clear acrylic panels, sound-absorbent walls, and even an absorbent "L.I.D." unit can help to contain a drummer's sound for home, studio, or live applications. These and all Acoustic Series products are available from **ClearSonic**. **(330) 650-1420, www.clearsonic.com.**

DB Percussion's separate-maple snare drums are a mid-price market. Kits like this 710-51 model feature attractive lacquer finishes. **(011) 86 769 373 8428, www.db-musical.com.**

Grip Peddler's line of custom-fitted bass drum pedal pads includes models for virtually all popular footboard designs. The company has also introduced Slickenz, a new type of grip tape with a soft, velvety feel (in three versions). **(949) 361-9999, www.grippeddler.com.**

R&B drummer Freddie Holliday tests one of **Hart Dynamics**' high-end electronic drumkits. The line features double mesh heads and Hart's realistic Ecymbals. **(850) 654-1455, www.hartdynamics.com.**

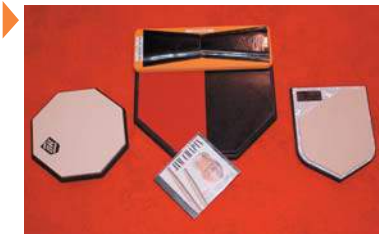
Whitney Drums offers a new Nesting Penguin series, which features birch kits with a "Solid-stave" construction. Whitney's Nesting Penguin kits, multi-ply snares, and wood hoops are also available. **(615) 631-2800, www.whitneydrums.com.**

Worldmax sells a complete line of drumkits and hardware, but focuses on its line of affordable high-quality drums. The company also offers a free online consumer research tool to help users find appropriate products. **(714) 842-2600, www.worldmax.com.**

The **Gator Cases** line includes Standard and Fusion drumkit bag sets, along with hardware, cymbal, and stick bags, as well as a rolling hard-shell cymbal case. **(813) 221-4191, www.gatorcases.com.**

New percussion-related titles from **Hal Leonard** include Scott Schroedl's *Drum Tuning: The Ultimate Guide* (book/CD) and Ben Hans' *40 Intermediate Snare Drum Solos*. **(414) 774-3630, www.halleonard.com.**

The new multi-surface RealFeel Mucho practice pad for timbale players (designed by Daniel De Los Reyes) has been developed by **HQ Percussion**. The company is also offering RealFeel Buddy Rich logo practice pads, an MBX Marching Bass Drum practice unit, and Jim Chapin's latest CD, *More Songs, Solos, Stories*. **(314) 647-9009, www.hqpercussion.com.**



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Impact Industries, noted for their bags and cases for drumset and marching drums, now offers covers for timpani. **(715) 842-1651, www.impactind.com.**

Innovative Percussion produces drumsticks, mallets, brushes, and alternative sticks for the marching, orchestral, and educational markets. Signature sticks by Christopher Lamb and James Campbell are featured models. **(615) 333-9388, www.innovativepercussion.com.**

Traditional Afro-Cuban Concepts In Contemporary Music, by Arturo Rodriguez, is a new title in **Mel Bay**'s percussion collection. **(636) 257-3970, www.melbay.com.**

The Enforcer is a starter kit from **Musicorp**. **(843) 763-9083, www.musicorp.com.**

Leather stick, mallet, and cymbal bags are new to **Pro Tec**'s extensive series of drum and percussion bags. **(714) 441-0114, www.ptcases.com.**

Protection Racket bags (distributed by Big Bang Percussion) now offer sizes for "Fast" toms and Latin drums. **(818) 727-1127, www.bigbangdist.com.**

This oversized luggage-style stick and mallet bag is offered by **Ritter USA**. **(866) 747-3043, www.ritter-bags.com.**

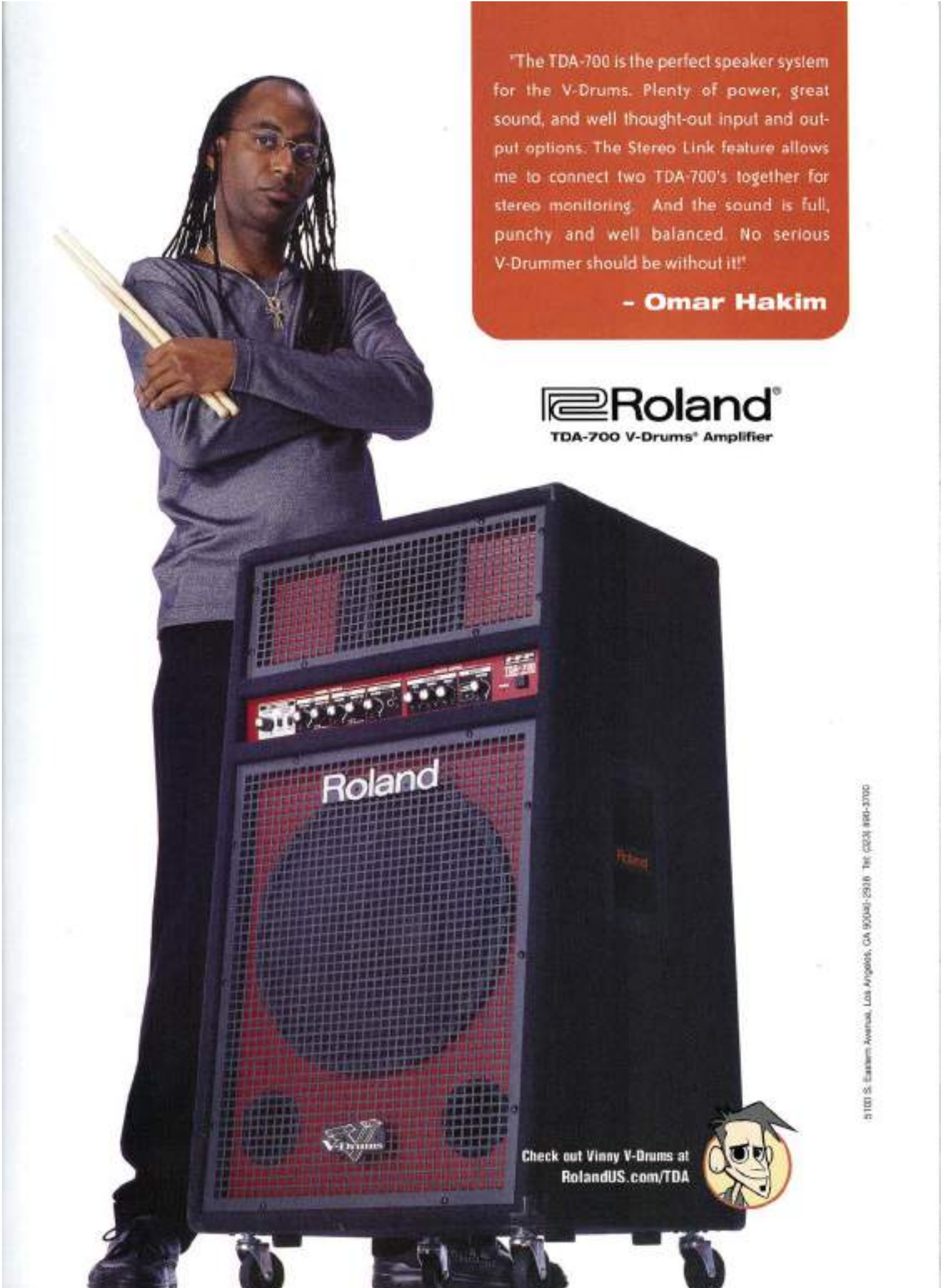
Sageman Drums manufactures its own line of hardwood djembes and didgeridoos. Each drum has authentic rope tensioning and is fitted with a natural goatskin head. **(949) 497-6469.**

In addition to its original bottled gripping compound, **Sticks Grip (1800) 808-3171, www.sticksgrip.com)** now offers drumsticks already pre-coated with the product. The sticks themselves are made by **Trueline (1802) 485-4900, www.trueline.com).**

Along with stave-shell drumkits made in Italy, the **Tamburo** line now includes congas and bongos made in Thailand. **(915) 591-5848, www.proelgroup.com.**

This display features a set of single-row bar chimes from **TreeWorks**, along with a mounting bracket and storage container. A damper system designed to work on any brand of bar chimes is also available. **(615) 780-2641, www.treeworkschimes.com.**

To help students and novices get involved in steel-drum (pan) playing, **Trinidad & Tobago Instruments** offers the Piti Pan (left) and the Double Mini Pan (center). The Percussion Iron (right) is part of T&T's Engine Room series of rhythm instruments. **(868) 627-0185, www.steelpansttil.com.**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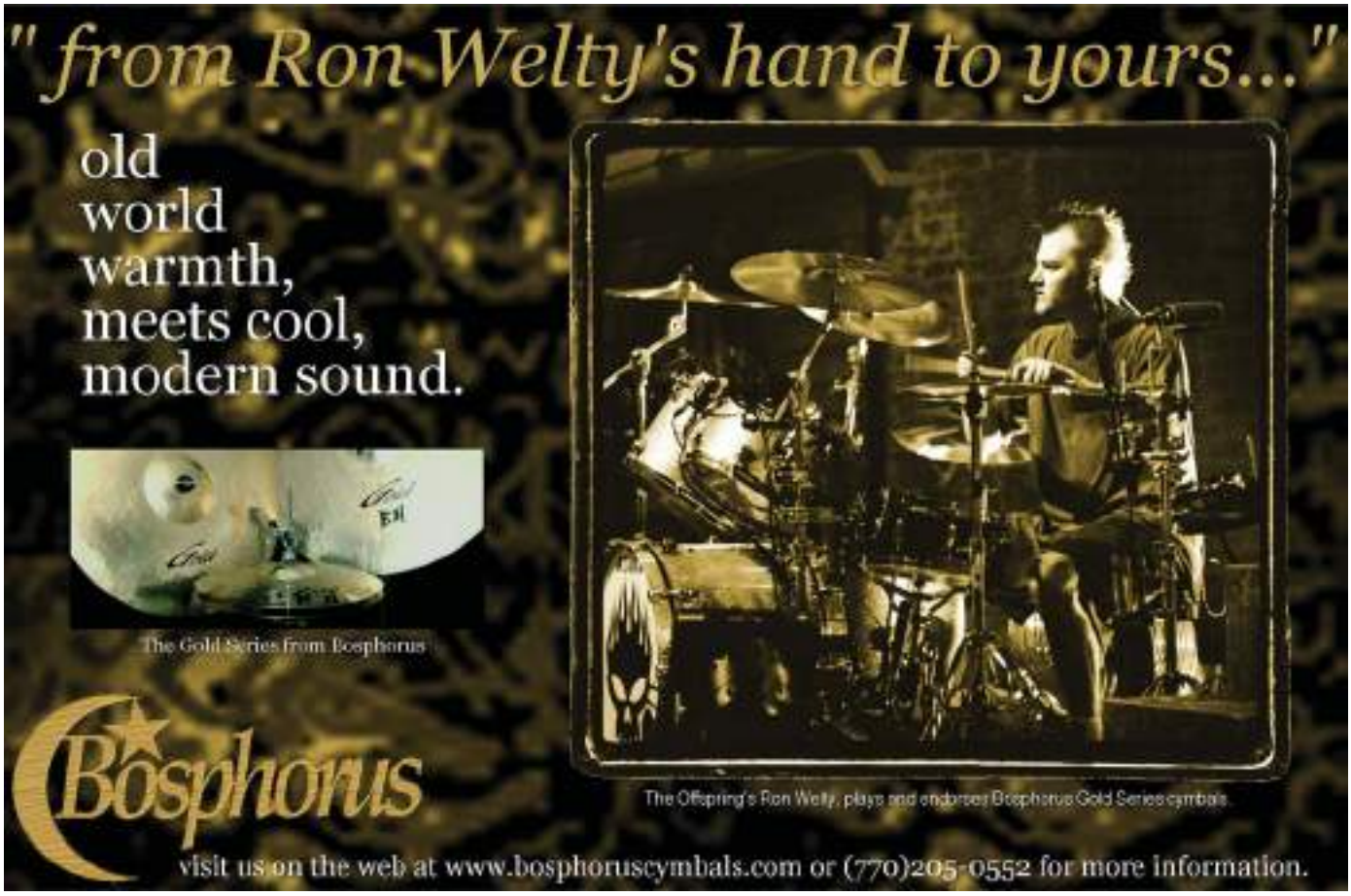
The Tiny Bubz stick, featuring O-rings around the handle, joins **Unigrip**'s line of L-Groover contoured-handle sticks and bamboo brush. The company also now offers their Kickstick in a bamboo-rod version. **(818) 840-0280, www.unigrip2000.com.**



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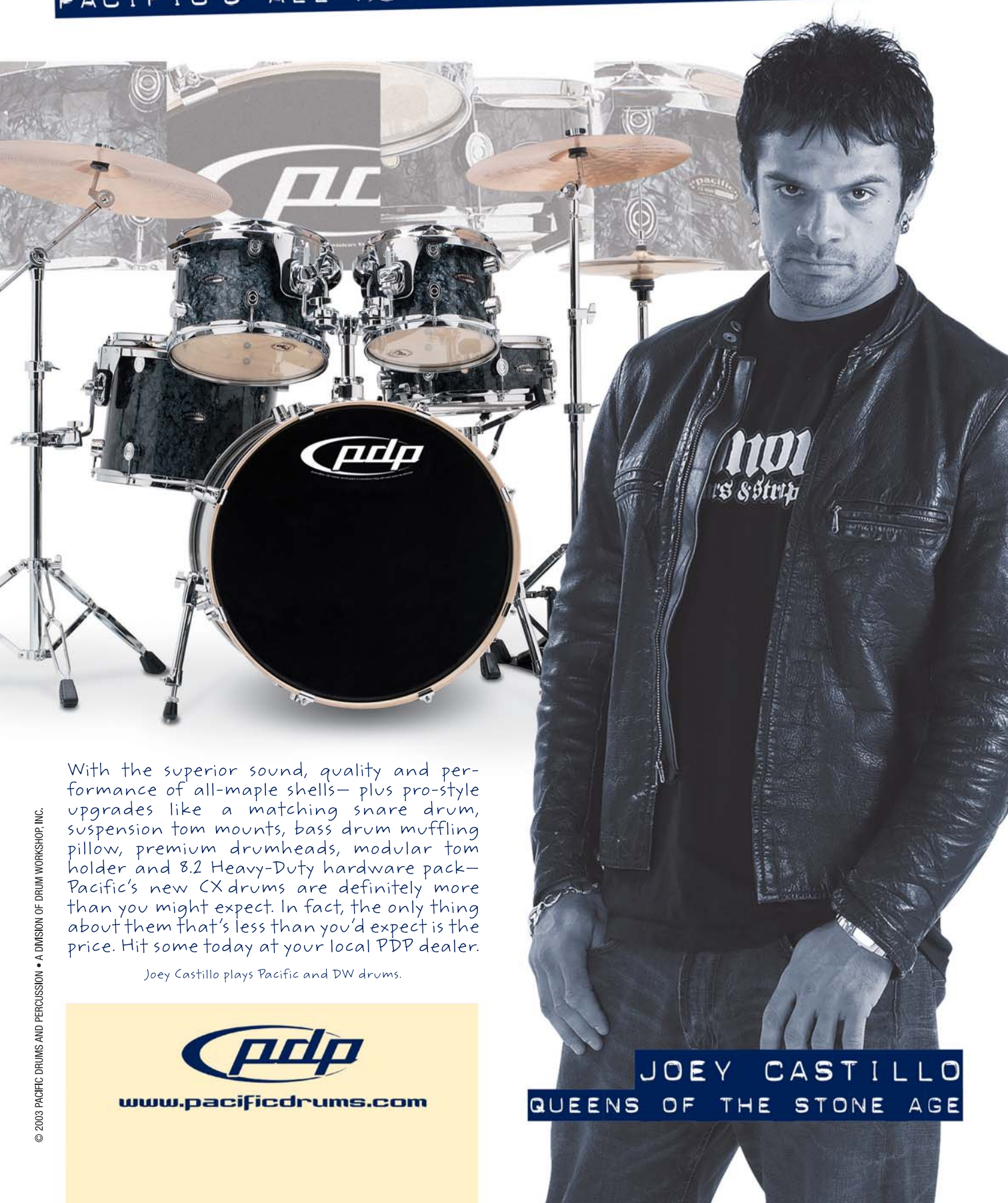

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GODSMACK'S SHANNON LARKIN ROCK SHOWMAN

Story by David John Farinella
Photos by Alex Solca

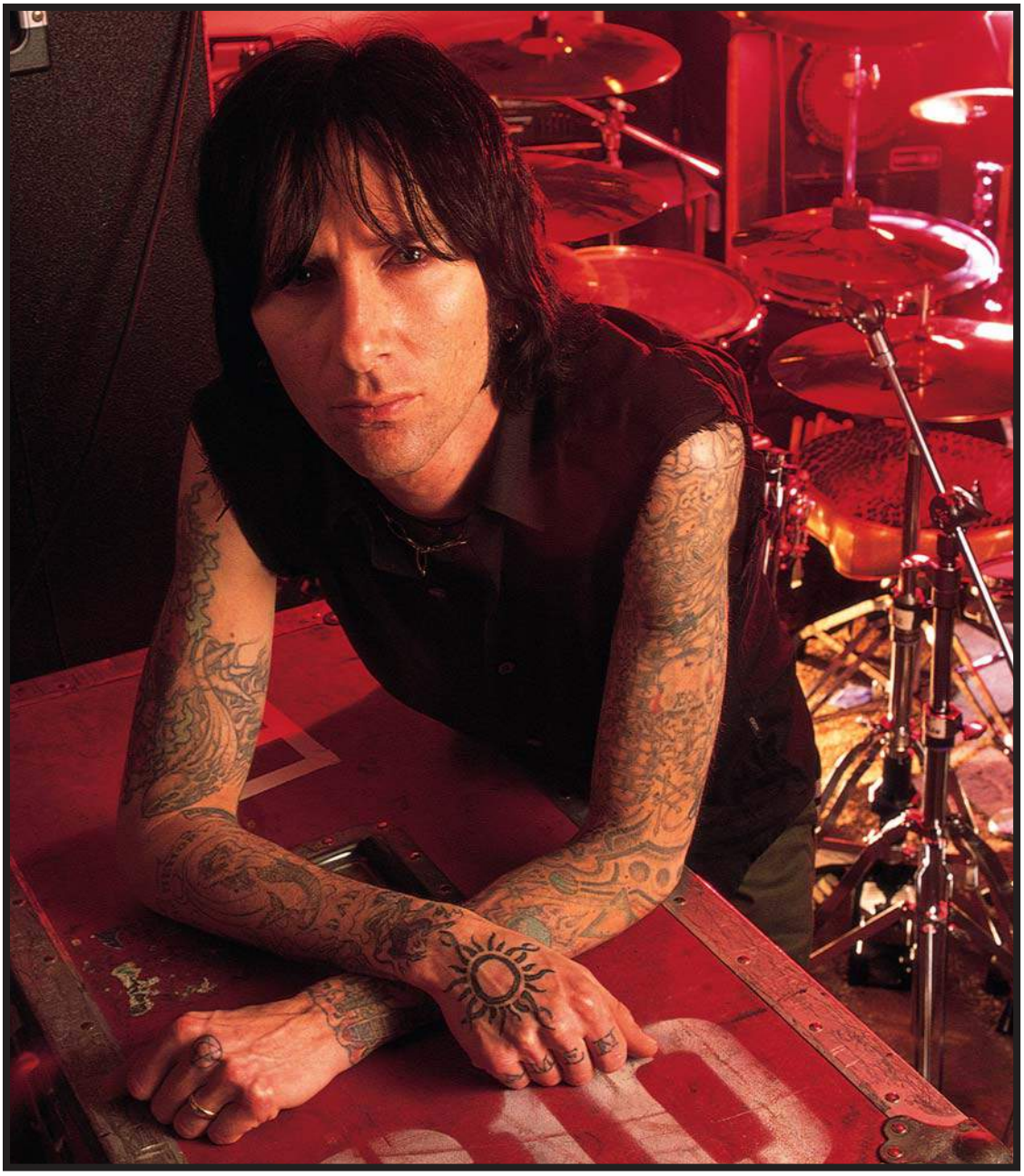
Growing up, Shannon Larkin worshipped at the twin altars of Neil Peart and John Bonham. To say that he was into classic rock would be an understatement. So getting a call to play a one-off show with Black Sabbath in 1997 was the thrill of a lifetime.

As Larkin recalls that gig now, everything was going great until the band ripped into "Sweet Leaf"—when he realized he couldn't remember a part of the tune. "I had four bars to get it together," Larkin admits, "so I thought, If anything, I'm just going to accent, stop, and listen. I might miss one beat, but then as soon as I hear it I'll come back in. Well, I stopped, but it was a big guitar accent! *Then* I remembered and came in with the rolls," Larkin says with a laugh. "But the look of evil that Tony Iommi gave me—it was like he was the prince of darkness."

Larkin, of course, wasn't thrilled either. "It was the only mistake I made," he says. "But I was so annoyed that I stood up and whipped my sticks at the backdrop. And then I turned around and there was Ozzy standing there. He was like, 'It's alright mate,' and then he pulled his pants down to his ankles." Then Larkin laughs hard. "Yeah, it was fun."

SAVAS
Marsh

While the Sabbath gig was certainly a high point in Larkin's career, it's not necessarily the peak. Just last year, the journeyman musician got a phone call from old friend Sully Erna, who was looking for a drummer to fill the spot in his multi-platinum band Godsmack. It was a cathartic phone call, since at that point Larkin was debating whether he wanted to continue playing for a living.



"I had just finished the Glassjaw record *Worship And Tribute*, and I was kind of fed up," Larkin admits. "It had been fifteen years of work for me, and I had done fifteen records." At that point he was a member of neo-metal act Amen, but Larkin decided to quit and pursue the session scene. "Two weeks after I left Amen," he says, "Sully called. He had no clue that I wasn't in a band anymore, and I had no clue they were having trouble with Tommy Stewart. It was just like magic. I was like, Wow, man, maybe it *is* in the cards for me after all."

To be sure, Larkin's elusive band success story wasn't for lack of trying. When he got his first kit, a blue sparkle Remo, a neighborhood friend named Terry Carter received a guitar. The two spent the next sixteen years together, learning their instruments and playing in the thrash-metal outfit Wrathchild America. That band morphed into Souls At Zero after a major-label deal and a couple of releases.

GIGS

Godsmack

Ugly Kid Joe

Glassjaw

Amen

Black Sabbath

Larkin played with Souls until 1994, when he met Whitfield Crane, Ugly Kid Joe's lead singer, during a tour stop in Vail, Colorado. "Whit came up on stage and sang

SMACKIN' DRUMS

Drums: Yamaha Recording Custom
A. 8" Tama Octoban
B. 5x14 Steve Gadd snare
C. 10x12 tom
D. 12x14 tom
E. 16x16 floor tom
F. 16x18 floor tom
G. 16x22 bass drum

Cymbals: Sabian
1. 13" AA hi-hats
2. 12" AA splash
3. 20" AA crash
4. 14" AA Regular hi-hats
5. 10" AA splash
6. 19" AA Rock crash
7. 20" AA medium crash
8. 24" HH Power Bell ride
9. 20" AA medium crash
10. 22" HH Power Bell ride
11. 22" AA Chinese
12. 12" Ice Bell

Electronics: Yamaha DTXPRESS
aa. pad

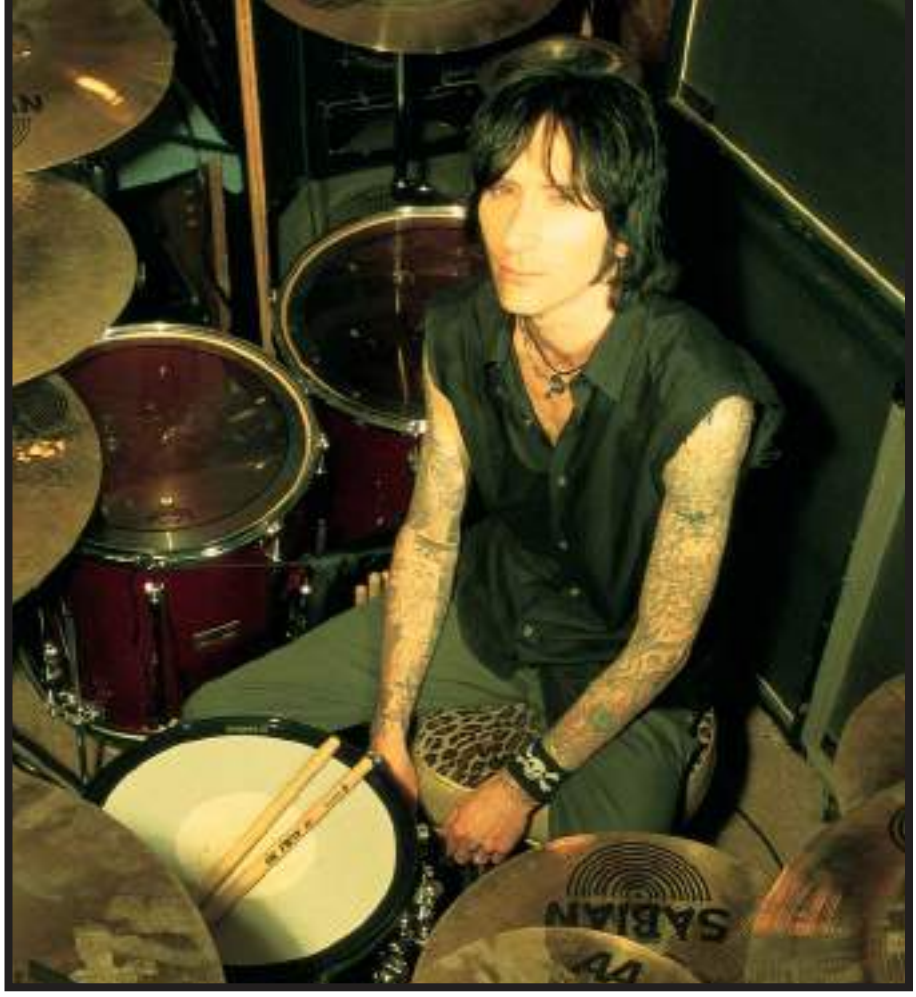
Hardware: All Yamaha, including a double pedal (tight spring tension on main pedal, looser on left)

Heads: Remo CS (dot) on snare batter, clear Pinstripes on tops of toms with Ambassadors on bottoms, clear PowerStroke 3 on kick batter

Sticks: Vic Firth American Classic Rock model (hickory)

an AC/DC song with us," Larkin recalls. "After the show he was like, 'Dude, come to Santa Barbara and join Ugly Kid Joe.'" Even though he wasn't an Ugly Kid Joe fan, Larkin fell in love with the town and was struck by the band's energy. "They were so passionate about the craftsmanship of a song," he says. "They were more of a rock band than a metal band. Metal can be very technical, where here it was all about the hook, the riff, and the song. It wasn't rocket science on the drums or anything, but they taught me about playing for the song—what's important drum-wise."

Along with Larkin's Ugly Kid Joe responsibilities—he played on the band's *Menace To Sobriety* and *Motel California* releases—he also started doing a handful of session dates, including albums with ex-Judas Priest guitarist Glenn Tipton, King's X bassist Doug Pinnick's side project Poundhound, and Vanilla Ice's rock debut *Hard To Swallow*. "I'm proud of that one," Larkin says of the Vanilla Ice disc. "That was a killer record. Producer Ross



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Robinson is very demanding when it comes to drums in the studio. Everything had to be 110% for that guy, and I love him for that."

When Larkin joined Amen, his playing took another step forward, thanks to the writing of the band's Casey Chaos. "Amen's music was difficult to play," Larkin admits. "It was constant 16ths, which they liked me to play on the bass drum. Casey was adamant about a single kick, too. He would come up with these single-kick beats that he wanted to complement the riffs. It was some serious stuff. I was with them for four and a half years, and by the end my right foot was *fast*."

Larkin is happy to explain his fantastic kick technique. "I definitely use the ball of my foot," he explains, "and my heel is totally off the pedal. I think the trick to playing a powerful pedal is letting the pedal do most of the work. It's the same thing all around the kit. Hulk Hogan could sit down behind my drums and whack the snare as hard as he could with all his bulk. But I'll sit behind it—weighing in at only 115 lbs.—and make that snare sound way louder than he could. It's all about your technique."

"WHEN I WAS A KID AND WOULD GO SEE BANDS, THE DRUMMERS WOULD ALL JUST SIT THERE. BUT I LIKE TO THINK OF MYSELF AS AN ENTERTAINER."

Between the metal and punk bands, Larkin built a reputation as a fiery live player. That vibe, he says, came from the influence of frontmen and lead guitarists. "First and foremost," he says, "I like to think of myself as an entertainer. When I was a kid and would go see bands, the drummers would all just sit there and play. Even if they had an intense look on their face, there was never anything more physical than the drumming. My idols were always the singers and the lead guitarists. For instance, AC/DC's Bon Scott and Angus Young—I worshipped those guys. Phil Rudd was a great time drummer, and his cymbal playing was awesome, but he just sat there and played. Don't get me wrong, he's a great drummer. But I was like, I want to be Angus Young on the drums. So I started banging my head like an idiot."

Godsmack's frontman, Sully Erna—a dynamic drummer in his own right—raves about Larkin's stage presence. "He's a great drummer," Erna enthuses. "Shannon has good chops, and his tempos

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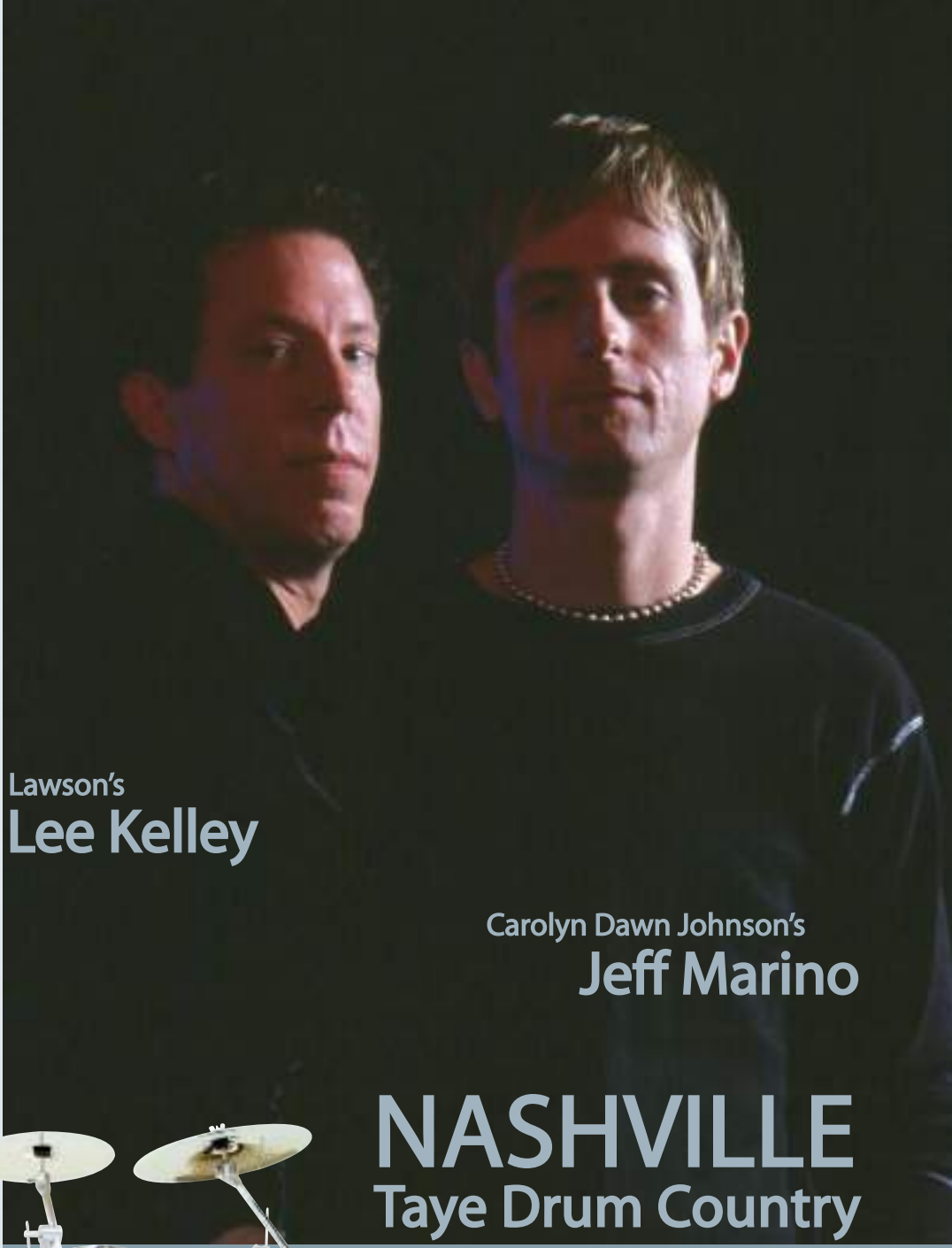

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are really nice. But he's a *great* performer. That's where he shines the most. For years I've told people about him, saying that if God made anyone to play the drums, it was Shannon Larkin."

Larkin is so sensitive to Godsmack fans who will be missing Tommy Stewart that he learned each song exactly as Stewart played them. "I did that for the fans," he says. "I understand, because when you love a band and all of a sudden a member leaves, it's kind of weird. I'd hate it when I'd go see a band—and I'd sat there for hours learning the drum parts—and the drummer would play it differently live."

After learning twenty Godsmack songs for the one-off Rolling Rock show, Larkin's style evolved. It was much like the change he made when he went from the rock band Ugly Kid Joe to the old-school punk of Amen. "I had to be a chameleon in order to make Casey Chaos happy," he points out. "He was the songwriter. That's kind of our job as drummers, to make the songwriters happy. They ultimately are the ones that have the vision and imagine what the finished song will sound like. So for us to do that, we have to complement their riffs and ideas."

Larkin went into the studio with Godsmack with that approach. "Sully would sing a drum groove, and I would duplicate it immediately on the kit," he says. "There's this one song on the album called 'Serenity.' Sully sat down with two hand drums and said, 'Here's how I want the beat to go. Apply it to the kit.' I could do that because we're so alike musically."

In fact, "Serenity" is a great example of how Larkin and Erna work together. "I had worked this beat out that combined toms and an Octoban," he explains. "When we went in the studio, we ended up doing it all on the 16" and 18" floor toms and then adding the Octoban later, because it complemented the hand drum. The drum beat, which was very complex when I wrote it, ended up being very simple in the studio, so that it just lays the foundation. Then when we added all the hand drums, it ended up sounding like the original beat I came up with."

The song, which was inspired by Neil Peart, meant a little something more to Larkin, since Rush was one of his first musical influences. He also tried to bring the Peart spirit into the sessions by using a pair of Peart's sticks that he got after he saw Rush play live. "It was a monumental thing," he says. "And since 'Serenity' was written about Neil, I wanted to play the song with those sticks. But Neil uses these toothpicks, man. They're like 5Bs or something [Pro-Mark 747s]. So as I was playing, Erna and producer David Bottrill were like, 'Yeah, dude, turn those sticks around and play with the butt end.' It just wasn't getting the power. I ended up just doing the Octoban overdubs with those sticks, but at least the magic of them is in that song."

While Larkin reports that he has played a "plethora of drumkits over the past sixteen years," he took a Yamaha Recording Custom set into the studio for the Godsmack record. He put Pinstripes on

continued on page 69

"Try 'em, you won't believe your ears"

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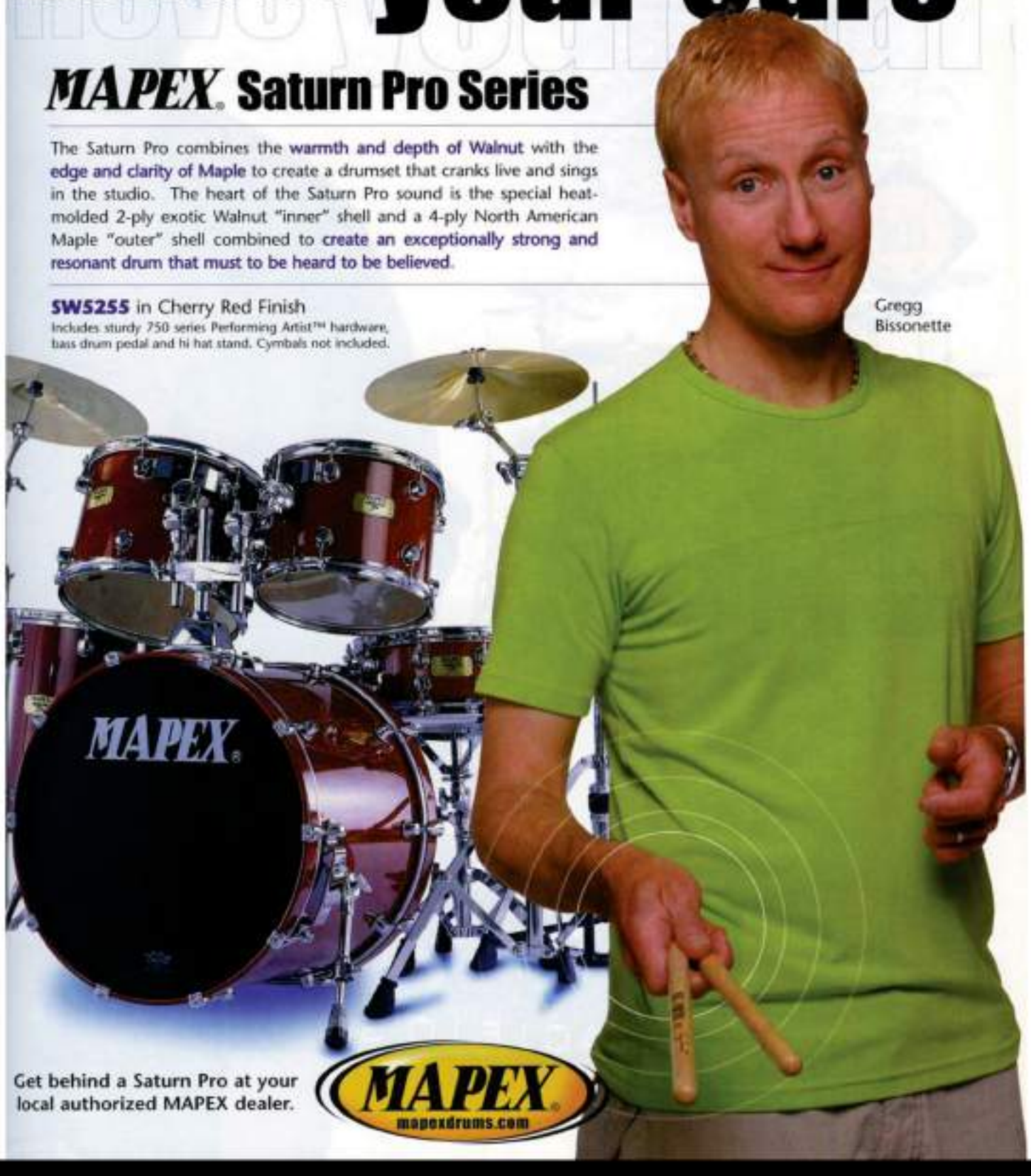

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life and music *are* demanding...
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if they do, I put my signature on them.
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Shannon Larkin continued from page 66

top, which was new for him, and Ambassadors on the bottom. They had dozens of snares ready to go, but stuck with a Yamaha copper drum with a Remo CS black dot head for all but "Serenity," on which they used an 8x14 Premier brass snare. When Godsmack hits the road, Larkin will use the Yamaha Steve Gadd snare.

Having Erna in the studio was helpful for a number of reasons, not the least of which was that he tuned the drums for Larkin. "I was sitting there in the room, stretching out and getting ready to do the take, while Sully was changing the heads and tuning them," Larkin says with a laugh. "It was awesome."

Erna also taught Larkin the trick of putting cotton balls in the floor toms. "When you hit the drum the cotton balls bounce up and fall back down to the bottom head," he explains. "It muffles the drum just a bit, but lets it ring for the second that you need. You can use as many cottonballs as you want. I think we used probably ten or twelve in each floor tom."

For cymbals, Larkin turned to Sabians. "My favorite Sabian is the AA 20" rock crash," he says. "But in the studio that thing was a bit too abrasive. If I was crash-riding 16ths, it was a little too much. So we went to a 20" AA medium crash instead for my crash-ride." A 19" AA rock crash and an 18" AAX rock crash also got the call. Larkin uses two sets of hi-hats, 13" and 14" AAs, to give him an accent option, and 22" and 24" HH power bell rides. "If I'm grooving on the big 24" and it's washing really nicely," he says, "I can go 'bang' off the bell of the 22", and it really cuts through."

When Larkin worked with producer Ross Robinson on the Amen and Glassjaw records, he was playing Vic Firth American Classic Rock sticks. "They're heavy, long sticks," he says. "But Ross was saying that since I hit hard, those sticks were choking the toms. So he made me switch to Vic Firth 2Bs, and with the strength I use to play with, they didn't choke the toms. But when I went to Godsmack, I went back to the big sticks. I must say I feel a lot better playing with large sticks, because it feels like I'm hitting harder."

Sixteen years, countless tours, and dozens of albums later, Shannon Larkin never thought he'd be where he is today. "Not in my wildest dreams," he says with a big smile. "Every band that I've played with, and every record that I've made, I thought would be huge. There's never been any doubt. I've never joined a band and thought, 'Yeah, this is all right. I'll do this until I find something better.' Every band I've been in I've believed in. That's why I think at the end of Amen I was like, 'You know what? Maybe this *isn't* what I do.' I've put so much faith and belief into bands, and then when it didn't happen, I felt like I'd been beaten down. But now I'm so glad that I stuck it out. Perseverance got me the Godsmack gig. And I

Matt Wilson's
Excellent Adventure

Story by Bill Milkowski
Photos by Paul La Raia

September 30, 2000: It's a typically packed Saturday night at Sweet Basil in the heart of Greenwich Village, near the end of a week-long run with The Dewey Redman Quartet. The first set this evening was killin', and spirits are running high throughout the room. But the band's normally gregarious drummer, Matt Wilson, is nowhere to be found during the break. An exuberant player and jovial individual, Wilson can usually be seen mingling with the crowd between sets, laughing it up and spreading good cheer with that genuinely infectious Midwestern smile of his. But this night he sits alone in the cramped space that functions as a backstage for Sweet Basil, silently pondering his fate.

Earlier in the day, Wilson received some sobering news from his pregnant wife Felicia: they were going to have triplets. The original sonogram, taken at the seven-week mark, had only indicated twins—a daunting task in itself. But a second sonogram, taken this very day, revealed a third baby. "Triplets!" he contemplates in stunned silence between sets. "Stuff was really starting to line up for me. And now…triplets! Oh man, my career is over. There's no way I can keep on doing this."

The challenge seemed overwhelming, the burden insurmountable, especially for someone who up until that moment had earned his living primarily on the road, touring with a host of jazz notables who had come to rely on Wilson's great ears and dead-on musical instincts behind the kit. And when he wasn't out with one of those groups, the workingest drummer on the New York jazz scene was hitting it hard with his own inspired band of upstarts (Andrew D'Angelo on alto sax and bass clarinet, Jeff Lederer on tenor and soprano saxophone and clarinet, Yosuke Inoue on bass) or his special-edition quartet (trumpeter Terrell Stafford, bassist Dennis Irwin, pianist Larry Goldings). But all that—the touring, the gigs, the calls—could very well dry up now, what with the triplets coming and all. So in his solitary moment of reflection between sets at Sweet Basil, Wilson seriously considers the unthinkable—ditching the itinerant life of a working jazz musician for a dreaded (but stable) day job. Taking stock of himself, it seems the responsible thing to do.

Gigs

Solo Artist
Cecil McBee
Dewey Redman
Lee Konitz
Buster Williams
Fred Hersch

But what else would Matt Wilson do? Playing the drums has been his passion (not to mention his sole source of income) since graduating from Wichita State University, where he and wife Felicia met as freshmen music majors. And it's been a steady uphill climb since then: First a move in 1987 to Boston, where Felicia, a classical violinist, could pursue an advanced degree at the New England Conservatory. Then a relocation in 1992 to New York, where Matt emerged on the scene with an abundance of natural talent tempered with a Midwestern work ethic. After gaining invaluable bandstand experience with two important mentors—bassist-composer Cecil McBee and the great tenor saxophonist and former Ornette Coleman bandmate Dewey Redman—Wilson formed his own band and began presenting original music imbued with an audacious spirit of risk-taking and fun that was wholly refreshing to even the most jaded observers on the jazz scene.

Nothin' But Juice

Following rave reviews for his 1996 debut on Palmetto Records, *As Wave Follows Wave*, Matt was instantly championed by critics as a talent deserving of wider recognition, both as a drummer and as a composer. Similar acclaim for 1998's *Going Once, Going Twice* and 1999's *Smile* elevated him to "happening" status. He earned further accolades (and made many critics' year-end Top-10 lists) for his fourth album as a leader on Palmetto, *Arts & Crafts*, which was recorded two days after getting the news of impending triplets.

April 12, 2001: At precisely thirty-five weeks and four days into her pregnancy, Felicia Wilson carries nineteen pounds of baby into the delivery room at Long Island Jewish Hospital. A staff of twenty people is on hand for the grand event, including the hospital's head of the neo-natal unit, who made a special point of attending this unique birth. Triplet births are invariably premature, with the babies generally weighing in at three pounds. Felicia's are double that and more. The babies arrive, via cesarean section, in rapid succession—Henry (6 lbs. 12 oz.) leading the way at 9:33 A.M. with Max (6 lbs. 2 oz.) following at 9:35 and Ethan (6 lbs. 2 oz.) right behind him at 9:36.

By this time, proud papa Matt has already reconciled his role as a working jazz musician and father of newborn triplets (plus three-year-old daughter Audrey). He's ready to strike that delicate balance and begin dealing as bassist Charlie Haden, a father of triplets during the '60s, had done before him. "I reached out to Charlie, and he was very supportive," recalls Wilson. "It was great to talk to him about the triplets thing and hear how much he was into it. I always felt part of that Ornette lineage somehow through Dewey, so this made another connection between me and Charlie. At some point I just realized that if Charlie could do it, I could do it."

January 14, 2003: While Matt is long past the shock of having triplets, his life has not returned to "normal." He may never know normal again, as if he ever did. And he never did get that day job. In fact, his workload has actually picked up in the past six months, as he's juggled gigs with The Buster Williams Quintet, The Herbie Nichols Project, Ted Nash's Odeon, piano trios led by Bill Mays, Denny Zeitlin, Frank Kimbrough, and Dena DeRose, and his own two quartets. There was also a duo tour of Europe with jazz legend Lee Konitz, resulting in the remarkably telepathic and purely improvised *Gong With The Wind* on SteepleChase, which offers stark evidence of Wilson's uncanny empathy and coloristic tendencies as a drummer.

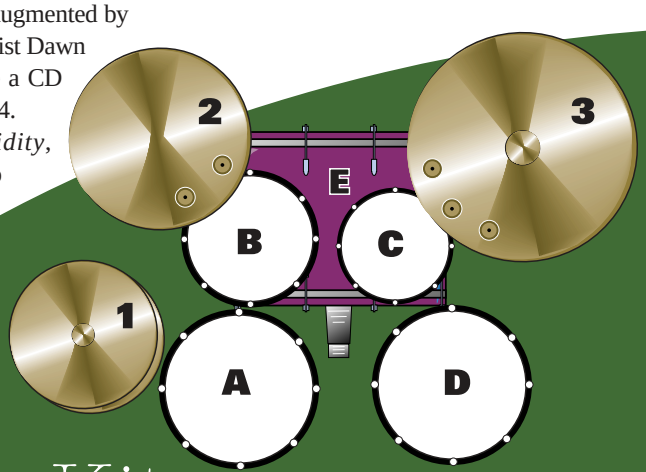
Last year Matt was a recipient of Chamber Music America's New Works grant (funded by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation), which resulted in The Carl Sandburg Project—a large body of compositions based on Sandburg's poetry. Wilson, whose admiration for Sandburg can be traced back to his debut album (the title *As Wave Follows Wave* comes from a section of Sandburg's poem "The People, Yes"), shares west-central Illinois roots with the great American bard.

As Wilson wrote in the program notes for a Knitting Factory gig last fall: "As I developed as a jazz musician, I stumbled upon a Sandburg poem titled 'Jazz Fantasia.' His words, to me, captured the spiritual essence of the jazz musician. This solidified my notions that Carl was indeed a serious hipster." Wilson performed the Sandburg works on tour with his sparkling quartet of D'Angelo, Lederer, and Inoue augmented by special guest vocalist and guitarist Dawn Thomson, with plans to release a CD of the material sometime in 2004.

Meanwhile, there is *Humidity*, Matt's latest on the Palmetto label. Like all of his previous recordings, there are a lot of surprises on this one, not the least of which is a special guest appearance by wife Felicia, who plays violin on three tracks. Elsewhere, Wilson's regular working quartet demonstrates the kind of uncanny sync that recalls the classic Ornette Coleman quartet.

From the loose-knit swing of opening track "Thank You Billy Higgins" to the Indian-flavored "Raga," from the giddy take on Tadd Dameron's "Our Delight" to the third-streamish "Wall Shadows," Wilson and company deliver with conviction and an easy comradery. Other textures, vibes, and colors are summoned up on the spacious and Zen-like "Cooperation," D'Angelo's frantic free-bop romp "Free Willy," a gorgeous rubato rendition of the jazz-standard ballad "Don't Blame Me," the Ornette-ish "All My Children," and the poignant closing ballad, "Beginning Of A Memory." Wilson's inimitably swinging/singing quality is in great evidence on every track.

We grabbed the busy drummer-composer-bandleader-dad and ubiquitous sideman for a sit-down at a bustling Penn Station coffee shop. Following the interview, his first in five years for *Modern Drummer*, Matt jumped back on the Long Island Railroad and headed back home to his family of five.



Matt's Kit

Drums: Pearl Masters Custom in red wood finish
- **A.** 5½x14 chrome snare
- **B.** 8x12 tom
- **C.** 3x10 soprano snare (used on occasion)
- **D.** 14x14 floor tom
- **E.** 14x18 bass drum

Cymbals: Zildjian
1. 14" CIE Vintage hi-hats (or 15" A Sweet Hats)
2. 18" prototype flat ride with two rivets (or various other models)
3. 22" K Constantinople medium with three rivets

Hardware: all Pearl (mostly from lightweight line), including a single bass drum pedal (medium tension) with a felt beater and an attachment for various percussion devices

Heads: Remo coated Ambassadors on snare and tom batters, clear Ambassadors on bottoms of toms (tight tension, bottoms tighter than tops), clear Emperor on bass drum batter, Ambassador (Pearl logo) on front (small folded towel used for muffling if needed)

Sticks: Zildjian John Riley model sticks, wire brushes, various mallets. (According to Matt, "I like to use alternate striking devices, including shaker sticks, jingle sticks, spatulas, forks, knitting needles, and other everyday items.")

Percussion: Peking Opera gong, children's handbells, various cowbells, Ice Bell, finger cymbals, tamborim, tambourines, light chains, pods, and shakers

Electronics: an old Univox drum box circa 1970, Boss SP-505 sampler

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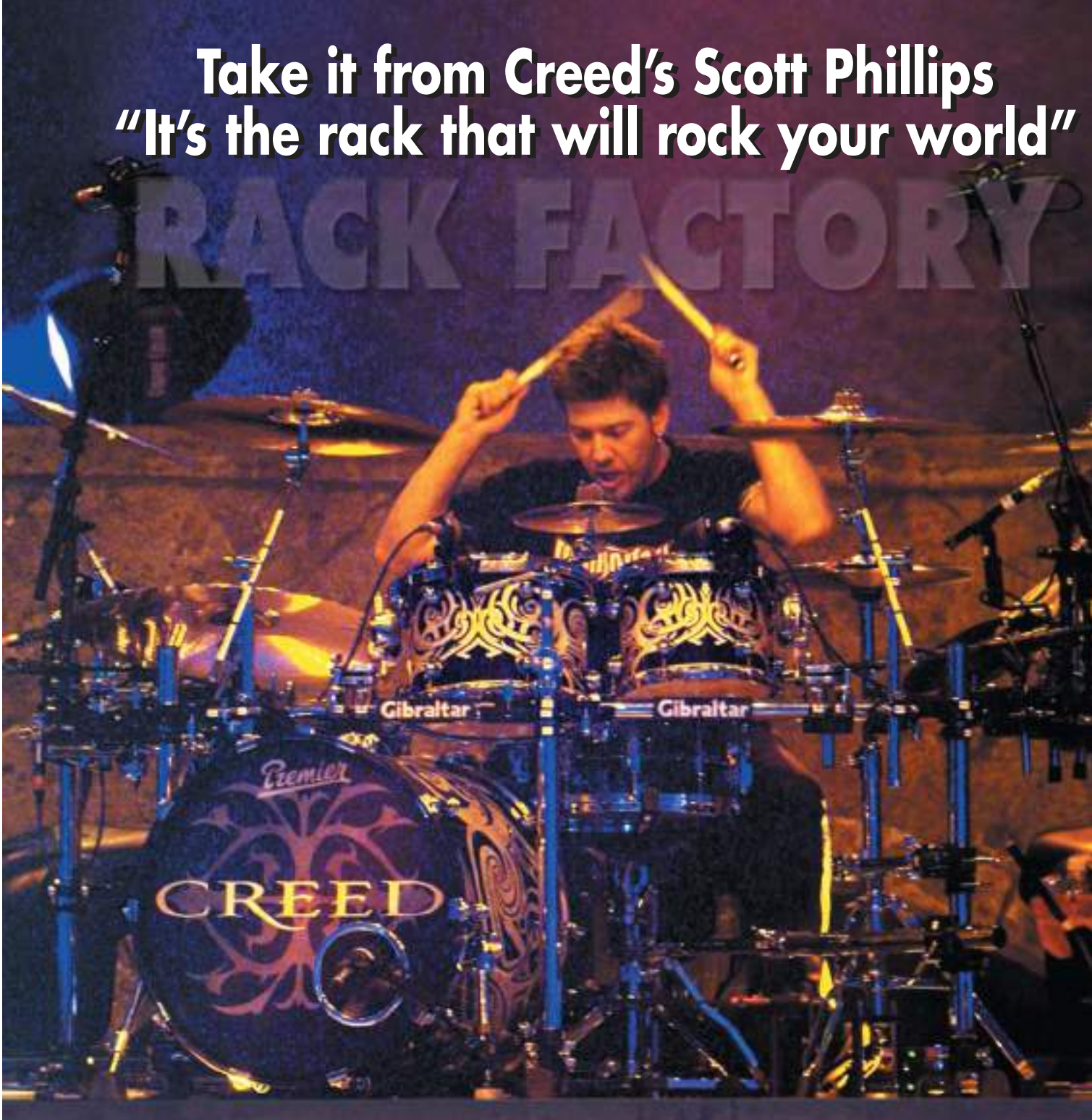

Scott Phillips' day planner typically looks something like this: January–March, play to over a million fans at arenas throughout North America. April & May, over to Australia, New Zealand and Europe. Next, back to the U.S. for a Summer/Fall stadium tour.

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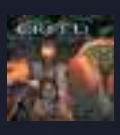

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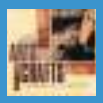
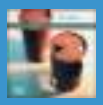
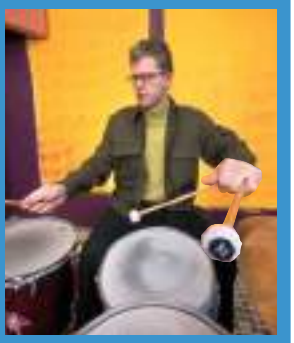



RECORDINGS

Artist	Album
Matt Wilson Quartet	Humidity
Matt Wilson	Arts And Crafts
duo w/Lee Konitz	Gong With Wind Suite
Ted Nash	Still Evolved
Bill Mays Trio	Going Home
Dena DeRose	Love's Holiday
Tom Varner	Second Communion
Herbie Nichols Project	Strange City
Conference Call	Conference Call



FAVORITES

Artist	Album	Drummer
Miles Davis	Workin'	Philly Joe Jones
Charles Lloyd	Water Is Wide	Billy Higgins
D'Angelo	Voodoo	?uestlove
Tony Williams	Spring	Tony Williams
Sonny Payne	Sinatra And Basie	Sonny Payne
Paul Motian	Monk In Motian	Paul Motian
Cheap Trick	Greatest Hits	Bun E. Carlos
Ben Allison	Peace Pipe	Mike Sarin
Peter Erskine	Sweet Soul	Peter Erskine

Also anything with Billy Hart, Joey Baron, Jim Black, Nasheet Waits, Kenny Wollesen, Dafnis Prieto, Jeff Hamilton, Susie Ibarra, Eric Harland, Jeff "Tain" Watts, Bill Stewart, Brian Blade, John Hollenbeck, Allison Miller, Alvester Garnett, Gerald Cleaver, Ted Sirota, or Ben Wittman.

MD: All these gigs you've been making must've taken your drumming up a notch or two.

Matt: I think the sound thing has gotten better. And I think my playing has improved along the way because I'm maybe not worried about that anymore. Also, it's an attitude thing. Lately…maybe since the boys have been born…I'm realizing that getting to play is just so great. I mean, you go through all this stuff that people have to deal with in life, which is joyful too in its own way, but getting on the bandstand…that's the fun part, you know? So many people put themselves in a place where even before they get to the bandstand they've taken away all the fun from it because they worry about it. I go to the bandstand with no worries and have fun playing. That's how I approach the music these days.

MD: In talking to people who have played with you, what they appreciate about you is your listening, openness, being right in the moment, and reacting to what they're doing.

Matt: That to me is the essence of accompanying. And I think in a group situation everybody is an accompanist to each other. Just being in the music is accompanying, regardless of what instrument you play. You're all going on this journey together when you play, so naturally you're accompanying each other on that journey. And the thing I really cherish about that is being in the moment, the realization that, "Wow, this is never gonna happen like this again!"

In jazz or improvised music, every time we play, unless it's recorded, that performance is gone when it's over, and there will never be another one like it. And sometimes you really would like to preserve it, but you have to let it go away. You can have some good memories from it but you can't really dwell on anything, whether it's a particularly stellar performance or not. It was just another day and you have to move on to the next one. And I feel the same way about recording. It's just a gig for that day that happens to be in the studio. So you can't go in with this attitude of, "Oh, gosh, it has to be this ultimate version."

MD: You also seem uncommonly open to playing any style of music.

Matt: I don't really think about what style

anything is anymore. I don't see any separation in the energies of somebody like (Hammond B-3 organist) Dr. Lonnie Smith and (pianist-composer) Andrew Hill. To me, their energies are the same. They both want to go out and express themselves, and they want me to express myself. And they both want to bring those feelings together on the bandstand. Obviously the roles may be a little bit different, but when you break it all down and get to the core of these great musicians, you find that same kind of open, giving, spontaneous energy.

Playing with Andrew Hill's trio last summer was an amazing experience. I just remember walking out on stage with no rehearsal and hearing him say, "Here we go!" We just played, and it was so great that I had tears in my eyes. Then a couple weeks later in Detroit with Dr. Lonnie…same thing! Amazing! Maybe the beats are different in those situations, but again, when you break it down it's really the same energy. Ultimately, if it feels like what we're supposed to be doing, then it's cool.

That underlying spirit that's in all of us, that desire to do improvised music, sometimes gets covered up because we worry about too many things. What's the instrumentation? What are these tunes? Is it swinging? All that stuff really doesn't make any difference to me anymore. And the people who come to hear you don't worry about those things either. They always feel that energy that you're putting out on the bandstand.

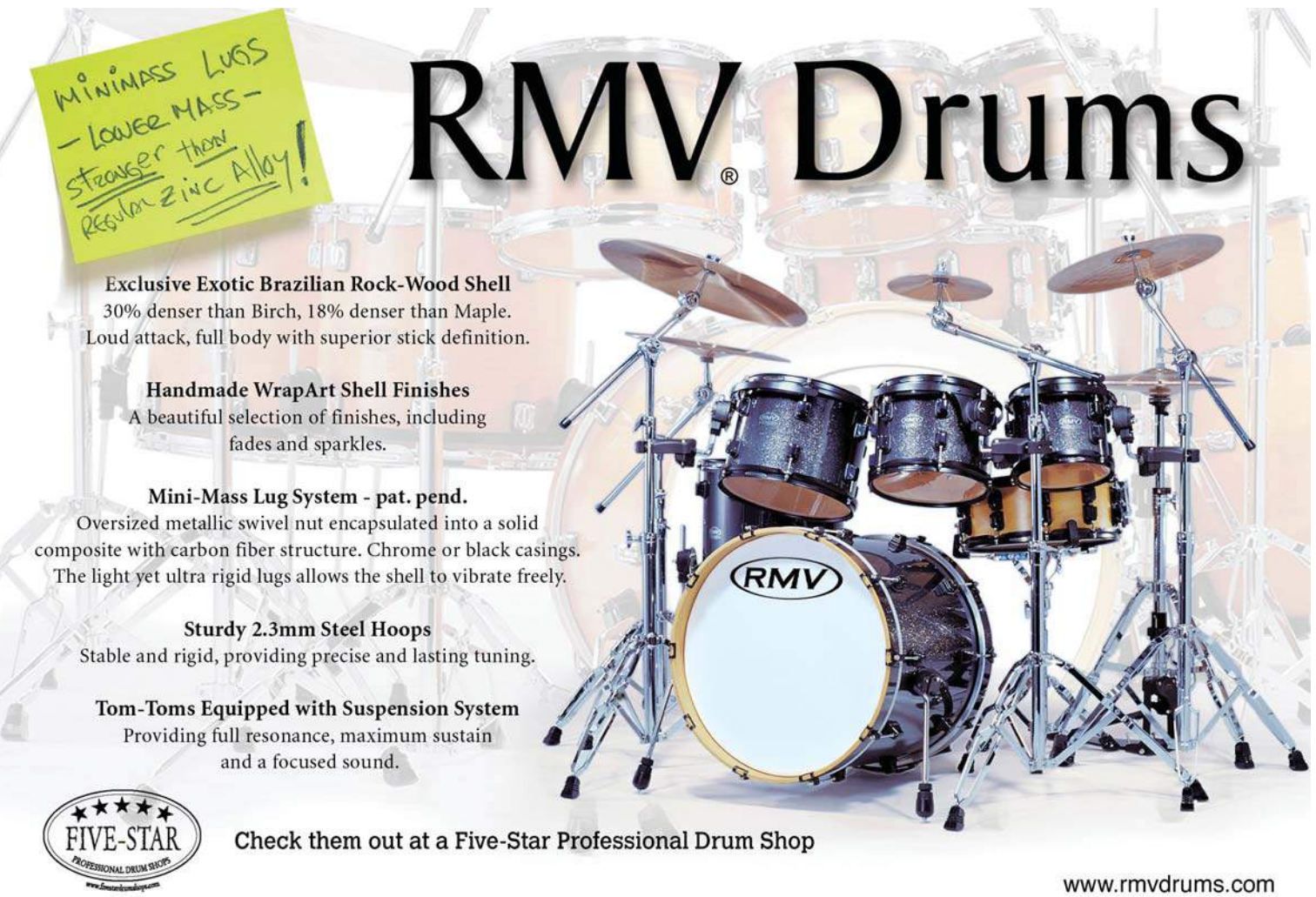
MD: And they want to be surprised.

Matt: Yeah, they do. When the audience realizes that the material is purely improvised and in the moment, they become more a part of it. When I played at the IAJE conference in Toronto recently with Denny Zeitlin and Buster Williams, people came up to us afterwards and were so excited because they knew that this was a performance for the moment. They could tell that it wasn't like we rehearsed this presentation for the IAJE, it was just a gig and this is the way the music went down at that moment. We went in with the attitude of "Whatever it is that's going to happen, that's what it's going to be." And that's an exciting process to be a part of, either on the bandstand or in the audience. That's music based entirely on trust between the players.

Buster and I talk about this a lot. In jazz education, one of the words that's left out sometimes is "trust." When you're up there playing, you really are trusting everybody to the highest degree. And besides the other people in the group, you have to trust yourself. So if you don't have your individual thing together, if you don't have confidence in your own playing, then you can't trust yourself, and consequently, it affects the group. If I wasn't able to play a shuffle or feel comfortable in any particular setting, then it's harder for me to put my trust out and trust others. So the trust thing is a big factor.

At this stage of the game, every musician you encounter is going to be proficient on their instrument. But what you have to do is find people who are putting out that same kind of trust. Playing improvised music, you have to have that confidence to go BAM! and make it work. And sometimes there's that feeling on the bandstand that no matter what you do, because of that love and trust around you, wherever you lay your hands, it's gonna work. And when you get to that point with a band, you can't ask for anything better than that. That's when it's really fun to play and the music is so great.

MD: And that quality of trust is what's hap-



pening on the bandstand when you play with Buster Williams or Cecil McBee or Lee Konitz?

Matt: Exactly! I really love being around guys like that. They're of a certain age but they're not old…at least they don't act old. I like the way Felicia puts it. She says, "All these great players are endless adolescents…they're like little kids." She always talks about the time that Lee rode with us to a gig and she said, "It's not like we're hanging with this older guy, we're hanging with this young energy."

MD: There was a period after the triplets arrived where you were concerned that you would have to cut your work back. But now it seems like you've increased your workload.

Matt: It has increased. I often wonder if it's because of the way I play or whether it's purely out of sympathy. "Boy, maybe we should give Matt some work. He's got all those kids to take care of." [laughs] I don't think it's that. But I haven't really had to cut back my work, and we've gotten through these first couple of years. I've been able to arrange things now so I'm not out on the road for very long and I can still keep pretty active and keep my hands in a lot of things.

For example, last week I was in Tucson for three days with singer Anne Hampton Callaway and The Tucson Symphony Orchestra with pianist Ted Rosenthal and bassist Dennis Irwin, then I was home. Then I was in Toronto for three days for the IAJE and then back home. This weekend I leave Friday for some gigs with Arts & Crafts, but I'll be back Sunday. I haven't really done anything extended like three weeks in Europe, just these brief hits.

MD: It's not like being out with Paul Simon or James Taylor for a year.

Matt: No, and I'm happy with having it be this way so it works out that I can do all these different things. That's kind of where I'm at now.

MD: You reflect that same eclectic or open-minded spirit on your own records.

Matt: Yeah, I'm not really with the thing that you have to make a record that stays in the same vein. I believe that somehow it can all work together if all the interests work. That's why I'm really excited about this new quartet record, *Humidity*. I really feel like we hit a new level on it as a group. We played some stuff we do together a lot on gigs, but then a lot of the stuff was brand new when

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we went into the studio. We sort of learned it there, actually. Sometimes it's good to get a band's first reaction to new stuff. We have a way of playing in the moment, so why not capture that on tape along with some stuff that we've been playing for a while?

MD: This quartet has developed such a remarkable chemistry over the past six years. You're so in sync now that it feels like the music could go anywhere at any moment.

Matt: And I think that sometimes it's in sync because it can also be *out* of sync, if you know what I mean. There can be things going on that aren't necessarily related but all of a sudden might be. The people in this quartet are not afraid to take risks or stay where they are for a little bit until things are back in sync again.

MD: Another well-received recording you did recently was the duo record with Lee Konitz (*Gong With The Wind*). It's an excellent example of your whole textural approach to the kit with sticks, brushes, and mallets.

Matt: I'm very proud of that duo album. We did it quickly and just improvised these pieces like a very natural dialog that developed between us. We didn't even discuss them other than to say, "Okay, you start this one." Lee doesn't play anything that's from a transcription book. It's pure improvisation with him.

MD: What did that sparse setting allow you to do that maybe you can't do in other situations?

Matt: It means that the full depth of the sound of your kit can come out. Like tom-toms, for example: You can really hear the toms on this in relation to the alto. And with the bass drum you hear the sound from when the beater strikes until it pretty much passes.

MD: Do you have to alter your kit to meet the needs of certain gigs?

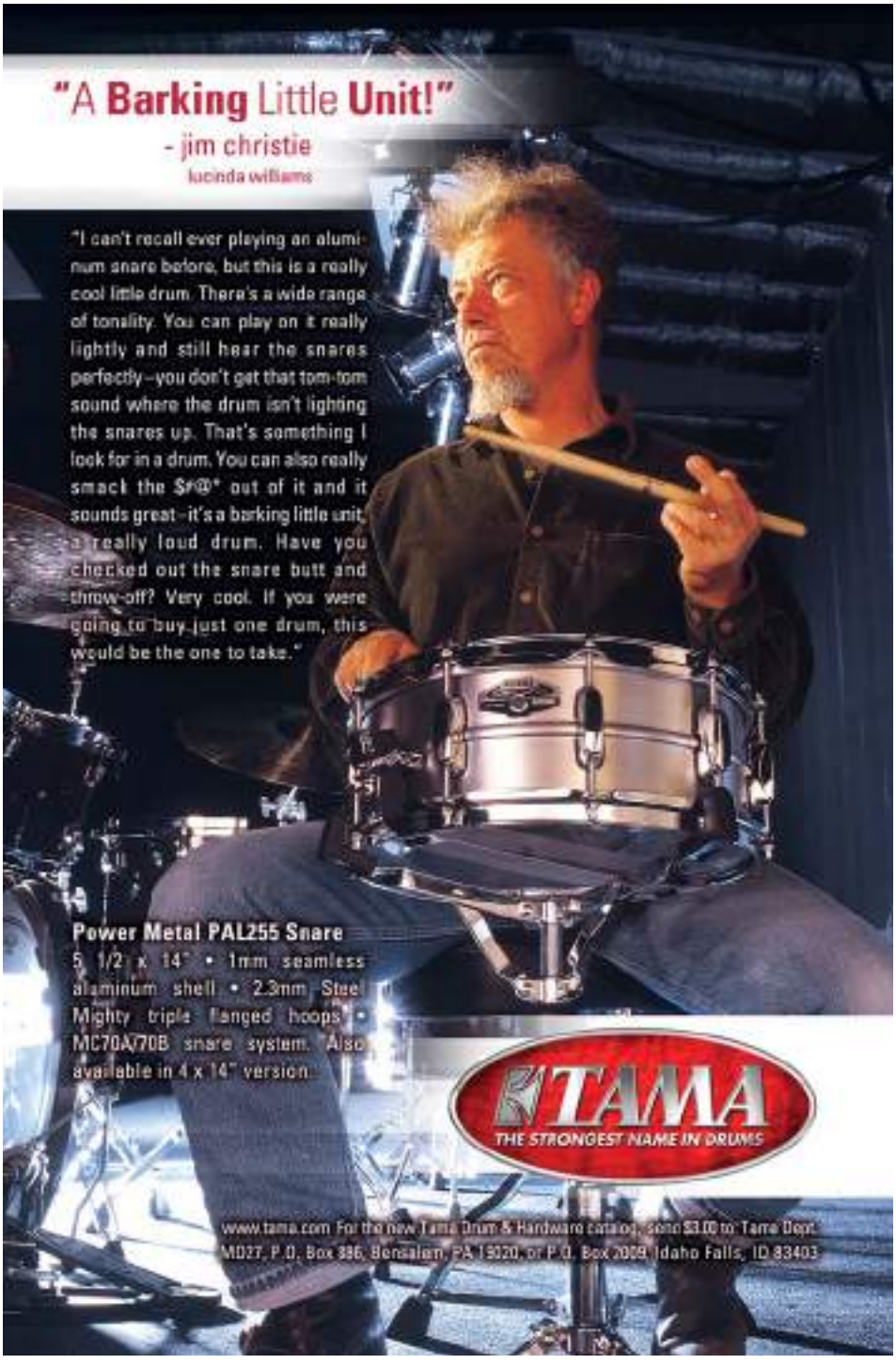
Matt: I change cymbals, but that's about it. I might detune the bass drum for effect. But no, I don't have a specific snare drum that I use for this person or that person. I use the same stuff, and I normally only use two cymbals. I may use a third cymbal depending on what the ensemble is or what kind of color I need. But I prefer just having two. I like to see how many possibilities I can get out of the stuff that's there.

MD: Can you detail your kit?

Matt: I've had the same Pearl drums for five years, and they're great. I basically use an 18" bass drum tuned wide open. I have a washcloth that I carry in my bass drum case that I'll fold over and put against the batter head by the pedal. Sometimes I take it away for certain tunes, just to have it be completely wide open. On the toms and snare I use Remo coated Ambassador heads. I play provided drums a lot of times when I travel.

I like to have my drums higher pitched, but lately I've been digging playing provided drums, where they're a little bit lower pitched and fatter sounding. Sometimes it's exciting to see what kit will be on a gig. In other words, I'm not really that much of an equipment monger.

Cymbal-wise I do change around a fair amount with different people, although I pretty much have been using this one main ride that I got from Zildjian a couple of years ago—a K Constantinople 22" medium with three rivets. I also have a prototype flat ride that I've been using a lot. It's really thin and expressive, and it crashes great. I also have two different pairs of hi-hats, either these 15" Sweet Hats or 14" A Vintage. That's pretty much what I use, along with whatever assorted percussion I



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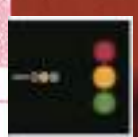

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might bring along for coloring, including some of my kids' toys.

MD: Is there something that you've played recently on record that you're particularly pleased with?

Matt: I'd have to say that one of my top five things that I recorded in the last couple years, if not ever, is the groove that Peter Washington and I get into on "The Good Life," from Dena DeRose's new album [*Love's Holiday*, Sharp Nine]. I'm just playing ride cymbal and the hi-hat on 2 and 4. But I listen to it and think, "Man, I'm finally getting close to actually making a groove happen."

Isn't that weird? You work all these years on technique and independence so you can do all sorts of stuff, but what really gets you excited is when you hear yourself groove with just a ride cymbal and hi-hat.

MD: That's why all those Basie grooves are so timeless and still feel great.

Matt: Yeah, or Vernell Fournier with Ahmad Jamal, or Jimmy Cobb with Paul Chambers. I mean, once I realized the integrity and power of that, I think it changed my life. Like Idris Muhammad, when I heard him with Ahmad a couple of years ago, it was so swinging and so great that there's no way you could not appreciate it. I mean, man, swing is alive! It's a beat that's so vibrant, like Billy Higgins. He sounded good with everybody.

MD: Speaking of Higgins, the first track from *Humidity* is "Thank You Billy Higgins." Why the dedication?

Matt: Well, I heard him in 1984 playing with James Williams at the Willow Jazz Festival in Boston, and it totally turned me around. I just started buying all these records with him on it, and I was like, Wow!

I heard Billy another time in Boston with Cedar Walton and Ron Carter, and he lifted the whole bandstand at one point, just woke those guys up during one of his solos while switching from brushes to sticks. He hit a downbeat in unison—BAM! And from that point on the set just took off. It was that one moment when he emphatically announced, "Let's play!"

So with this track I just wanted to say thank you to Billy for what he did for the music and for me. His influence on me is profound.

MD: What specifically did you admire about Billy's playing?

Matt: He was able to play stuff that was really singing, and technically his rebound thing was so cool. I also always loved hearing his cymbal-with-the-rivets thing. I went out and got a cymbal with rivets the very next day after I saw him play. And I loved how he played with mallets. But just how he could play a beat was so amazing. That's the thing I've most tried to emulate.

MD: I understand that you also have a great admiration for the kind of no-time aesthetic of Paul Motian.

Matt: Absolutely. I went to hear his trio at the Village Vanguard with Bill Frisell and Joe Lovano, and I walked out of there going, "That's it!" It's the pinnacle of years of playing all these different kinds of music and bringing all that experience to the bandstand. And with those guys, it's almost like my boys at home. You put them in their room and say, "Okay, here's all these toys. Now come up with something to do." And that's what those guys were doing. "Okay, here are some tunes. Now play with 'em." They're not playing them, they're playing *with* them.

Paul's whole spirit to me…I mean, look at him. He's a kid at heart! And whatever he does works. Wherever he puts his hands, it's gonna work whether it's loud or soft. Joey Baron is the same way. I

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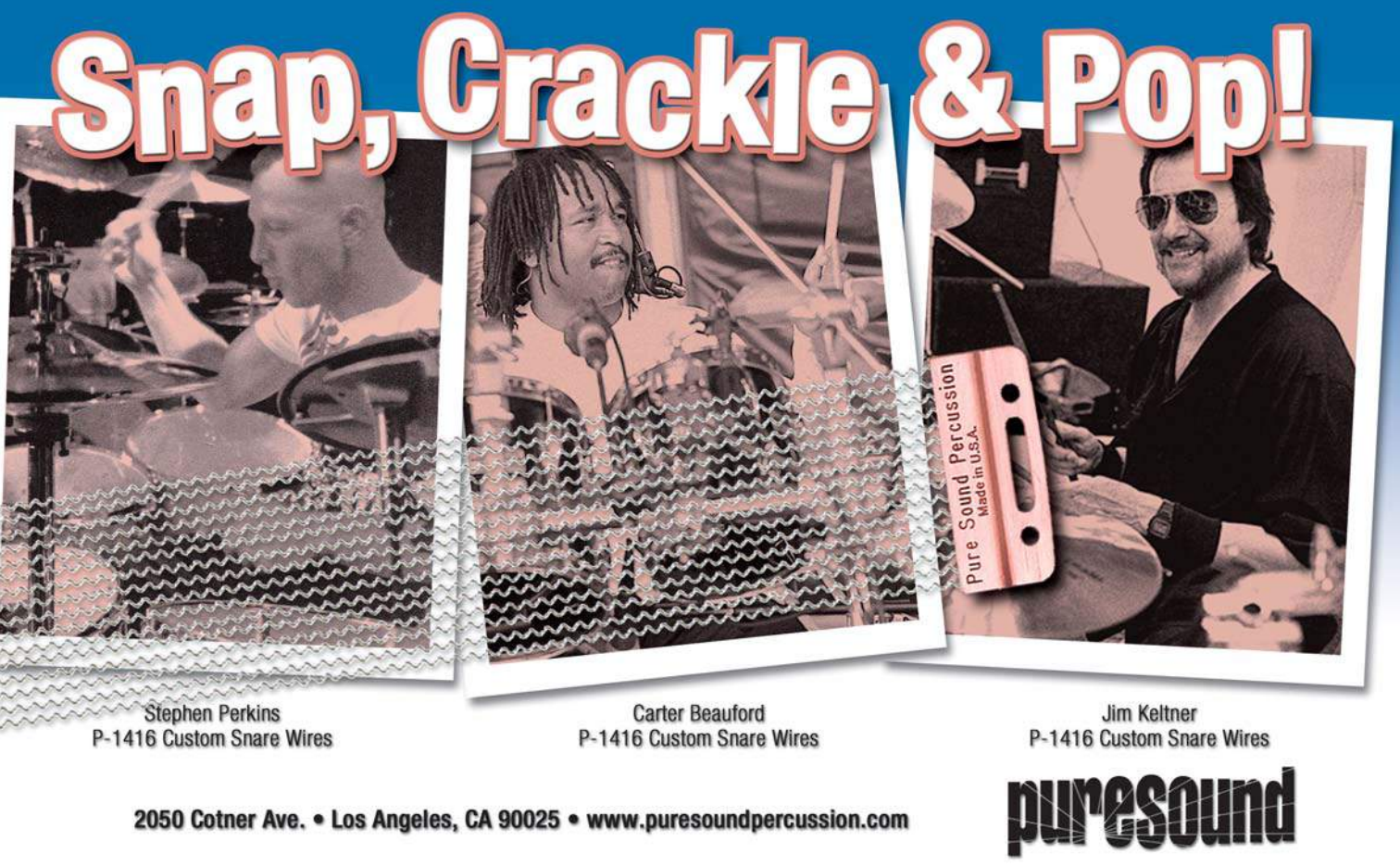


Matt Wilson

even feel the same with players like Lewis Nash, Adam Cruz, Nasheet Waits, or Clarence Penn. I feel like everything they play is just so right. It's inspiring to be in New York and see all these guys do their thing.

MD: Like Roy Haynes?

Matt: Roy Haynes, man! Here he is, seventy-five years old, and just killing! He's a powerful force. To me, Roy is timeless. You could put him in any setting and he'd be great—Coleman Hawkins, Bird, Sarah Vaughan, Monk, Trane, Metheny…he sounds great with all of them. People like Roy, Billy Higgins, Grady Tate…they always play exactly what should be played. They have such refined instincts.

I was in Spain last summer with Andrew Hill, and we went to see Elvin play. There again, I didn't see Elvin playing drums, I saw this *force*…just like Sonny Rollins playing the saxophone. You just see this sort of energy up there. Dewey is the same way, Billy Hart, Jimmy Cobb…you see guys like that and you think, "Wow, they've been doing this for so long. How many hours have they sat there and played these instruments?" It's amazing.

Maybe it's the same way with someone like Jack Nicholson. I mean, look how many movies he made before he got to the level where he's at. How many hours did Tiger Woods continue to swing a golf club or how many free throws did Michael Jordan or Larry Bird shoot after school? They didn't just shoot eight and go in the house. They kept shooting. It's the same with all these great musicians when they hit the bandstand.

MD: Looking back, what lessons are you thankful for having learned?

Matt: I realized a long time ago…maybe it was from living in Wichita or growing up in Illinois, where I had to play a lot of different kinds of gigs…that I *couldn't* just play one thing. And I'm glad it was that way, because if I had just played jazz or this or that, then it would be kind of limiting. So I'm glad I played in wind ensemble and orchestra in school, because I can hear those things in the music I'm playing now. I think playing in a large ensemble is really good for ear training. I can hear around an ensemble now a lot easier than if I had only played quartet jazz. So I'm glad I did all that stuff in college.

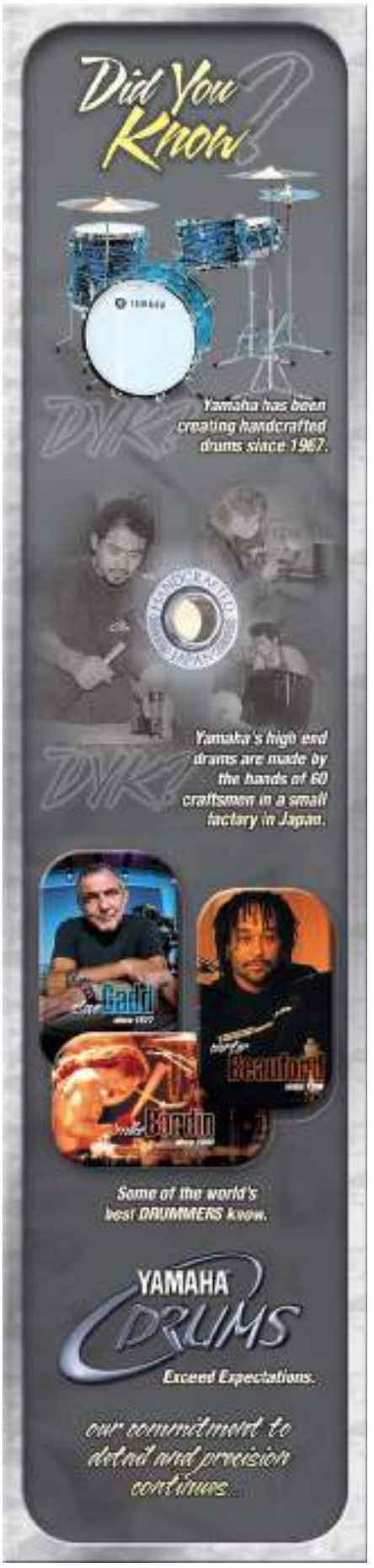
MD: Were you career-minded when you first came to New York? Were you on a mission?

Matt: I think what I wanted to do was take advantage of all that's here, all the different kinds of things that you can do as a musician. In New York, if you're lucky you can get involved with legends, because they live here. You can play with Lee Konitz or Andrew Hill or Buster Williams, if you want to. So there's that. But I also wanted to lead my own band and have some projects of my own. Now I have a handful of them and a few that can actually go out on the road and work. I didn't come here to play anything specific—totally free jazz or bebop or whatever. I came here with the attitude of

"Whatever comes along, I'll do."

I came up with that ethic of "If I'm playing the drums and I'm working, then I don't have to do anything else." So it's been pretty groovy. Also, I came to New York because I knew that if I didn't at that particular time, I was probably going to fall into a routine that maybe would not have allowed me to maintain a positive level with my playing. So I felt like moving from Boston at the time that I did was a good decision, just to help my playing get to another level.

Rufus Reid told me a long time ago, "Leave an area once you feel like you've sort of squeezed everything out of it in a certain way—you've played with everybody there is to play with. Don't leave because you're pissed that you're there." Sometimes musicians leave a place because they're not working. Well, if you're not working, who's to say you're going to find work where you're moving to? So try to keep a good vibe in the place you're leaving. I still have a great relationship with people I played with in Boston or Wichita or even my hometown area. It's all cool.



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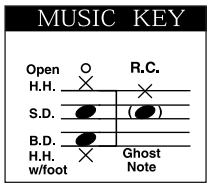
Ghost Notes

Adding Depth To Your Groove

by Ken Vogel



Any serious drummer understands that good dynamic control and good time are important components for achieving a great groove. Combining light taps, known as ghost notes, with accented notes on the snare drum can add spice to any beat pattern.

Today ghost notes are common in rock, funk, country, Gospel, jazz, Latin, and fusion. It's important that you listen to and study the masters in order to better understand and benefit from the material presented in this article. A good place to start would be with the music of James Brown from the '60s.

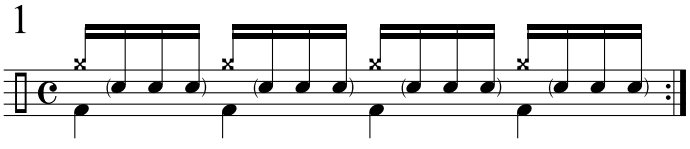
The ghost notes featured in this article are to be played as light taps on the snare drum. The accented notes should be played at a normal 2 and 4 backbeat volume. This concept will vary from style to style. Accented snare beats in rock will be louder than those in jazz.

Several method books worth mentioning that feature ghost notes are *Future Sounds* by David Garibaldi, *Give The Drummers Some* by Jim Payne, and *The Commandments Of R&B Drumming* by Zoro.

To begin, play the bass drum on beats 1, 2, 3, and 4 while playing the preliminary exercises and practice variation.

16th Exercises

1



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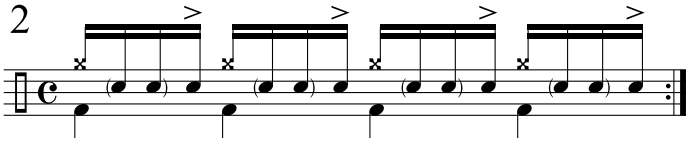

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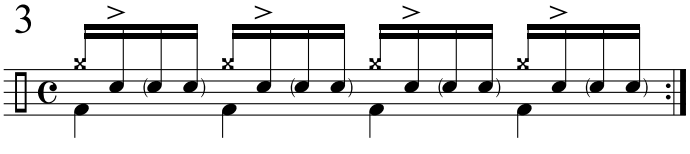

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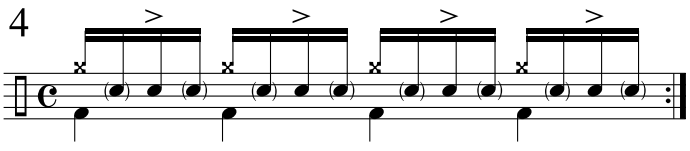

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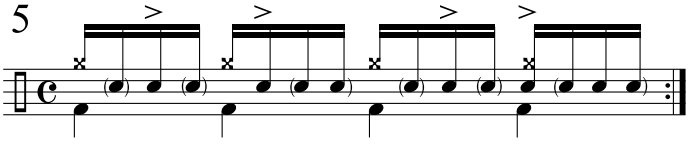

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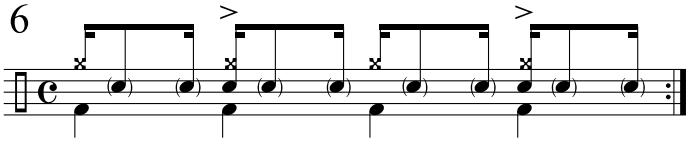
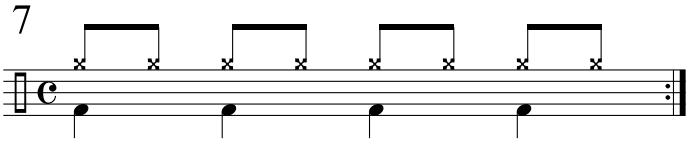


Practice Variation

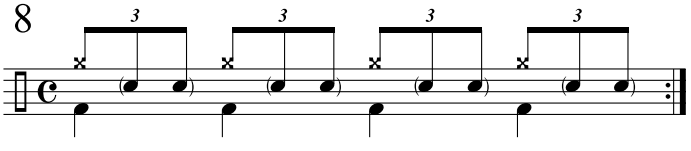
Once you've mastered examples 1-6, go back and play them with this time variation (8th notes on hi-hat).

7



Triplet Exercises

8



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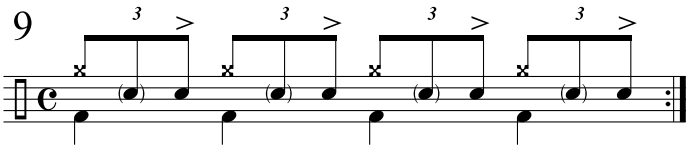

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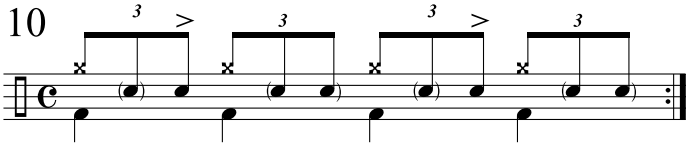

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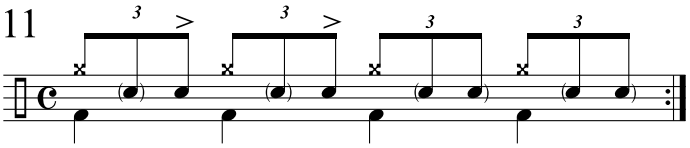

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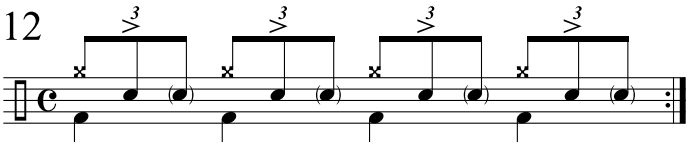

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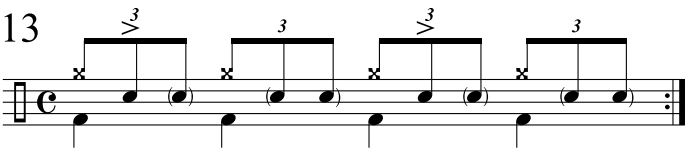
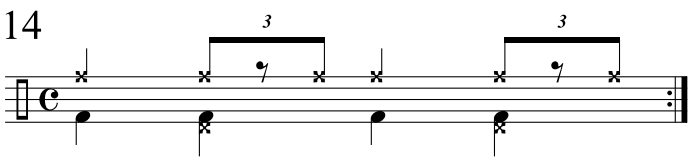


Practice Variation

Here's a jazz-time variation that you can apply to examples 8-13.

14



Rock, Funk, And Fusion Beats

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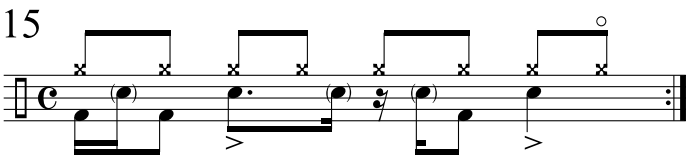

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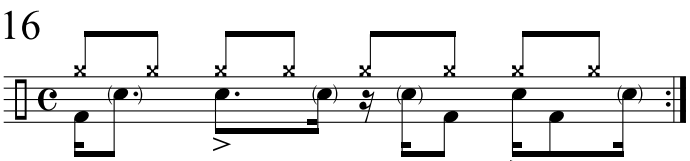

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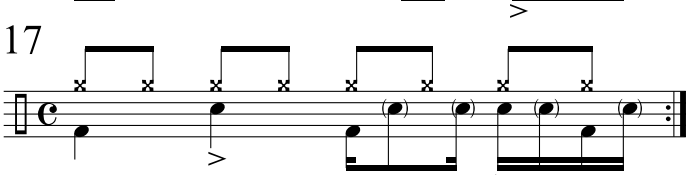

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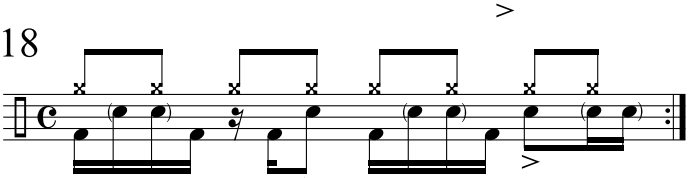

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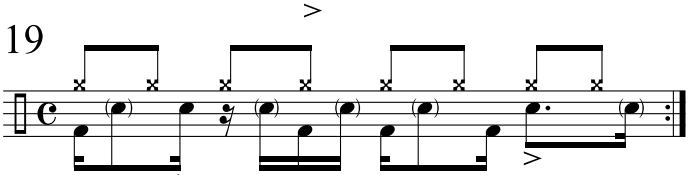

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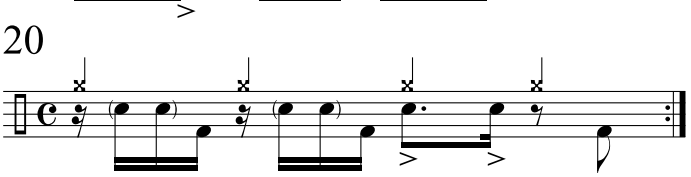
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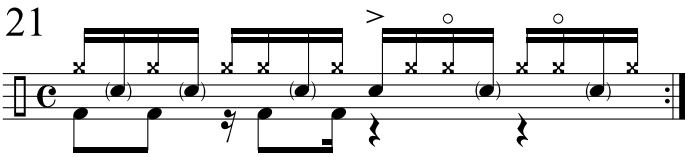

Shuffle And Funk-Shuffle Beats

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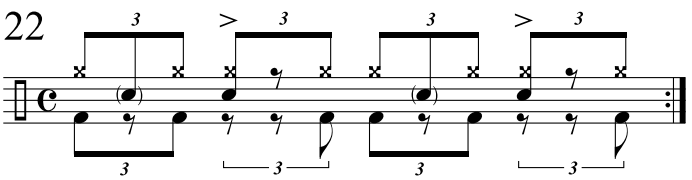

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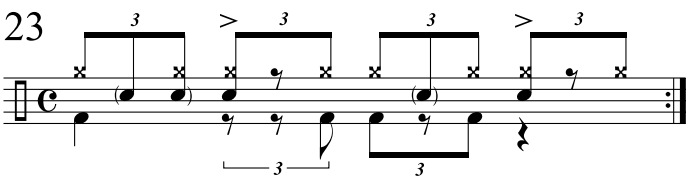

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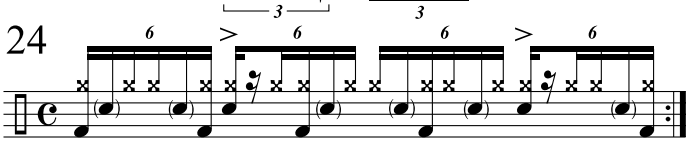
Jazz Pattern

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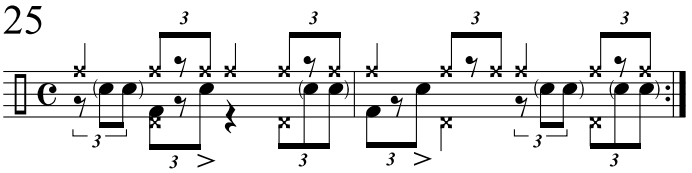
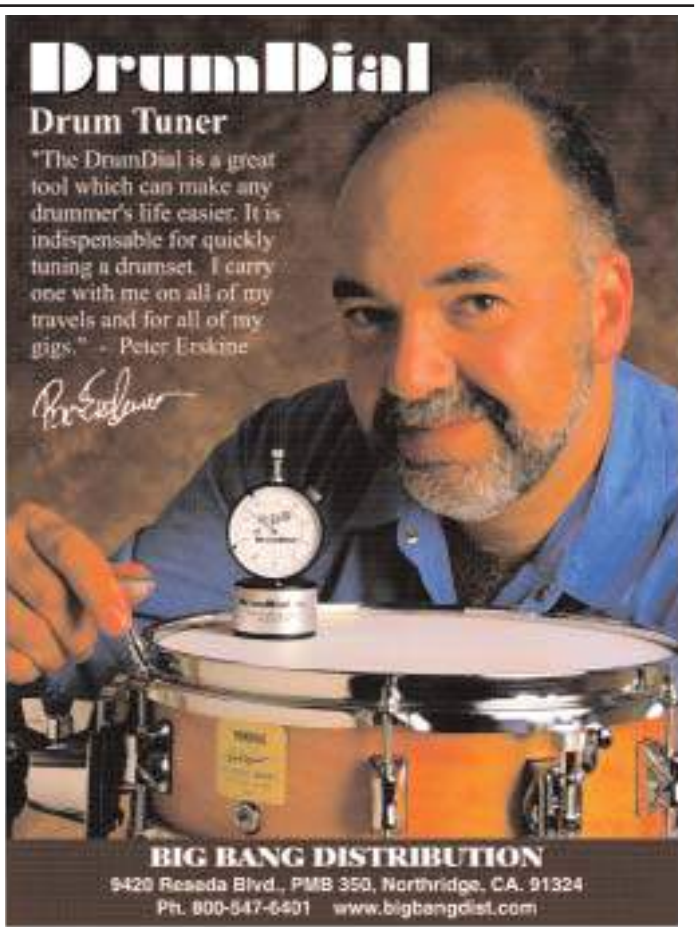
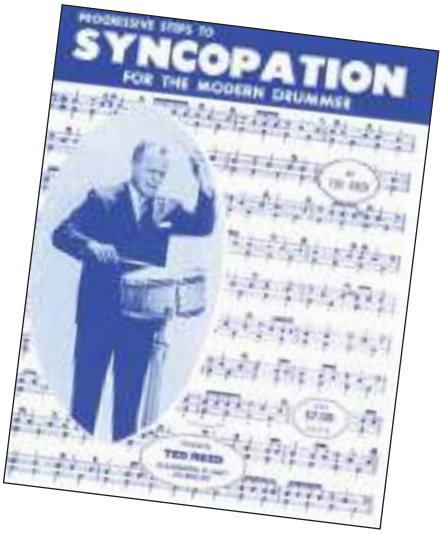
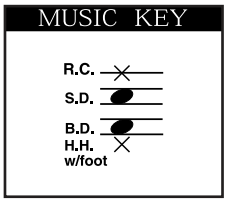




Getting Creative With Reed's Syncopation

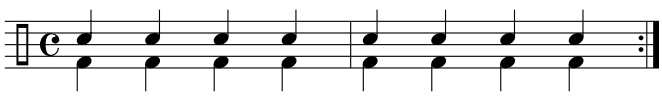
Part 1: Jazz Variations

by "Tiger" Bill Meligari



Many drummers buy a drum book, practice it as written, and then put it on a shelf to gather dust. They never realize that there are at least a dozen variations that can be applied to the exercises. Creating your own variations not only makes purchasing books more cost-effective, it helps you improve your chops in ways the original writer probably never imagined.

To give you an example of what you can do, let's take a look at Ted Reed's classic book, *Progressive Steps To Syncopation*. If you have the book, follow along. If you don't, learn the variations using the examples I've provided here, and then apply them to any book that contains similar exercises.

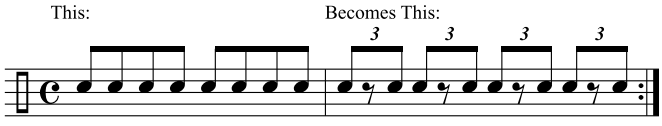
Syncopation was originally written to be played as follows: Notes written with stems up were to be played using alternating hand-to-hand sticking on the snare drum, while notes written with stems down were to be played with your foot on the bass drum. (See Example A.)

Example A

Although I recommend that you practice *Syncopation* (or any book) as originally written the first time, on subsequent reads I think you'll find the variations that follow are a lot more fun and challenging.

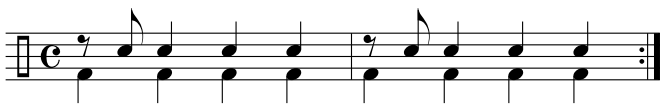
Creative Jazz Variations

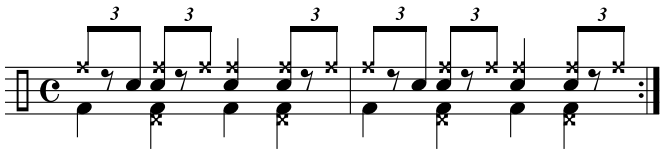
The following variations are designed to develop your jazz chops and can be applied to exercises on every page in *Syncopation* (with the exception of pages 20 through 28, which contain 16th notes that don't fit the jazz vein). Note that any exercises containing "straight" 8th notes in the written part are to be played using "jazz interpretation" (swung), as shown in Example B.

Example B



Variation #1: Play the written snare drum line with the left hand on the snare and the written bass drum line with your foot on the bass drum. Add the jazz time beat of your choice (I chose the standard jazz beat) and play it with your right hand on the ride cymbal. Add the hi-hat with your foot on 2 and 4. This turns *Syncopation* into a jazz coordination book similar to Jim Chapin's *Advanced Techniques For The Modern Drummer*. (Note that although you may see jazz ride cymbal time written using dotted 8th notes followed by 16ths, it's usually interpreted and played in triplet form as shown below.)

Original Example

Variation #1



Variation #2: Play through the book again the same way as in Variation #1, except reverse the hand parts this time. You'll now be playing the written snare drum part with your right hand and the ride cymbal pattern with your left hand. This helps build your ambidexterity, which is the ability to use either hand equally well.

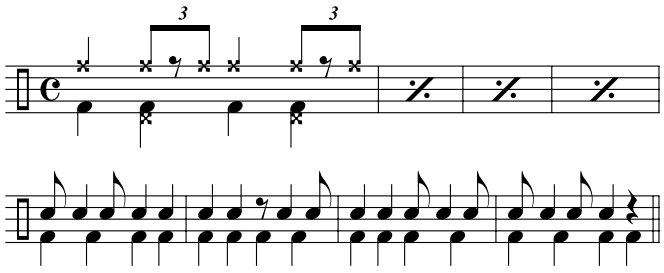
Variation #3: Again, using the original example from Variation #1, play the 8th notes written on the snare drum line with the left hand on the snare and the quarter notes written on the snare line with your foot on the bass drum. Play the written bass drum part with your left foot on the hi-hat. Add the jazz time beat of your choice with your right hand on the ride cymbal. This again transforms *Syncopation* into a four-way jazz coordination book.

Variation #4: This exercise will give you practice in "trading fours." Here's how it's done: Play four bars of time as shown in Variation #4 below, followed by a four-bar fill (also called a solo). The four-bar fill in this example has been taken from the first four bars of page 37 in *Syncopation*.

In a live playing situation, an instrument (like a guitar or horn) would solo for four bars while the drummer plays time. Then the drummer plays a four-bar solo.

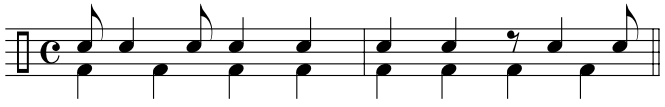
Try to be creative when playing the written part. For example, you can play all 8th notes in the written part on the snare drum and all quarter notes on the toms, or you can play all written 8th notes as flat flams (one hand on snare, the other on floor tom) and play all written quarter notes on the bass drum. Experiment to come up with your own variations.

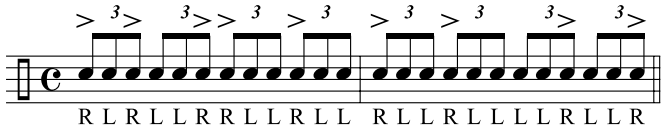
Variation #4



Variation #5: This variation produces a great exercise that was one of Buddy Rich's favorites. The first two bars are exactly as they appear on page 41 in *Syncopation*. I added the 8th-note triplets and sticking below to show you how to interpret the written part. Every beat becomes an 8th-note triplet, and you play all written notes with your right hand while "filling in" the additional triplets with your left hand. This converts the written rhythms into jazz interpretation.

Try playing this variation in two ways: Play both hands on the snare drum, accenting only the right-hand part while filling in the triplets with the left hand. Then play the right-hand part on various toms while your left hand plays the triplet fill-ins on the snare drum.

Original Example

Variation #5

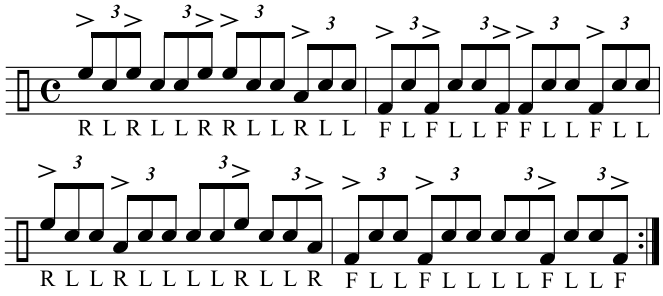


Variation #6: Another one of Buddy's favorite techniques was to play an accented rhythm on the snare or toms and "answer" it on his bass drum while filling-in on the snare drum. *Syncopation* contains many exercises that are ideal for developing this skill.

Look at the example for Variation #5. What we're going to do is similar except that we'll be repeating each bar *twice* before moving on to the next, as follows. Play the first bar (of the triplet pattern) using your right hand on the toms while filling in the missing triplets with your left hand on the snare.

Now repeat this bar again, substituting your foot on the bass drum (indicated with an F in the music) for the right hand part while continuing to fill in the missing triplets with your left hand on the snare. This effectively "answers" what you played with your right hand in the previous bar. If you've ever listened to Buddy Rich for any length of time, you've heard him play this idea. Try it. It's a lot of fun and sounds great.

Variation #6



Next month we'll apply some creative rock variations to *Syncopation*. Until then, stay loose and get creative.

"Tiger" Bill Meligari is a professional drummer, instructor, and clinician, and the Webmaster of www.tigerbill.com. Bill is currently working with Vince Martell, original lead guitarist from The Vanilla Fudge.

Odd Times

Part 1: Playing Outside The Box

by John Riley

MUSIC KEY

R.C.
S.D.
B.D.
H.H. w/foot

In the 1950s and '60s, Max Roach and Joe Morello were the most visible and prolific explorers of rhythms in odd-time signatures. At that time, instrumentalists other than drummers were actively mining melodic and harmonic frontiers; very few musicians concerned themselves with writing odd-time music.

In the 1970s and '80s, Billy Cobham and Trilok Gurtu, both with John McLaughlin, reminded us of the potential in this untapped universe. Finally, in the 1990s, the odd-time pendulum had swung to the point where prominent composers and bandleaders actively incorporated tunes in odd times into their repertoire. Musicians Dave Holland, Steve Coleman, John Zorn, Kurt Rosenwinkle, Chris Potter, Branford Marsalis, and many others found odd times a great way to generate new musical dimensions and challenges.

Today everyone is playing in odd times. And just as drummers Max and Joe were the first to be comfortable playing odd times, bandleaders today look to their drummers to be quite fluent and solid regardless of the time signature.

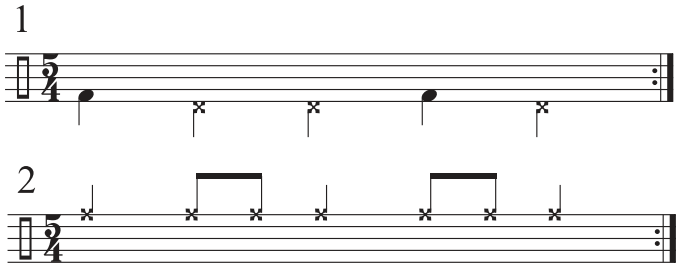
One of the reasons odd-time music was less attractive to the beboppers was because the odd-time groove rarely flowed as smoothly or as effortlessly as 4/4. The rhythmic patterns of 5/4, 7/4, and the like always felt heavy and boxed in by an insistent "1" on the bass drum.

There's an old story about a famous musician who moved from New York to overseas. But after a couple of years he moved back to New York, and when asked why said, "Because nobody knew where '1' was over there!" Early jazz musicians often accented the first beat of every 4/4 measure, but by the swing era a smoother flow came into favor that has continually evolved. Obviously, that New Yorker wasn't looking for musicians who would play the "1" of every measure. Rather he sought those who could feel the "1" without having to accent it every bar.

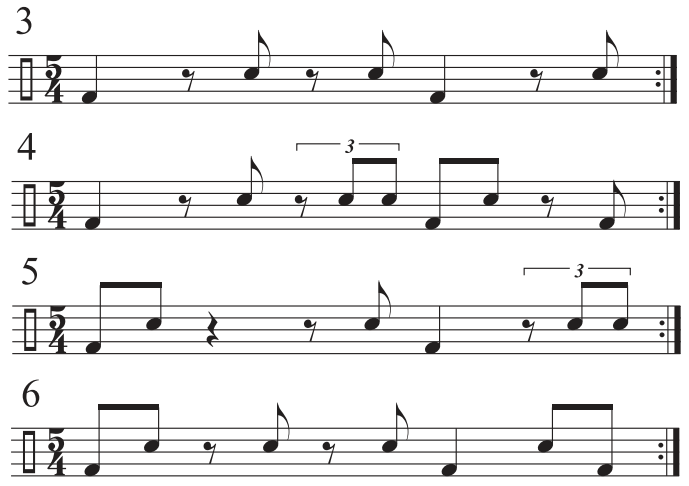
A similar development has taken place in the modern treatment of playing odd-time songs, and that same ability is required; feel the "1," but don't *play* it all the time. In this series of columns we'll work towards that goal.

It's impossible to play in any odd time signature if you can't keep track of each beat in each measure. Before one can omit or avoid the "1," one must have a firm grip on *playing* the "1." We'll begin by working in 5/4, which is often subdivided into a three-beat phrase followed by a two-beat phrase—12345 is thought of as 12312.

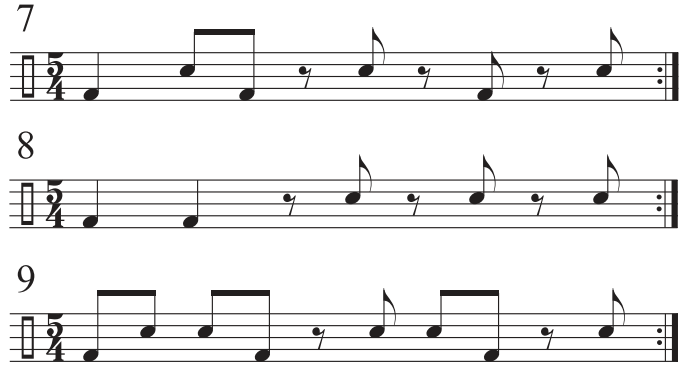
Get comfortable with this foot pattern, then add the ride cymbal pattern and play until it flows. (Also, be sure to swing all notated 8th notes.)



Next we'll add melodic ideas to all the above, played on the snare drum. It will be helpful to count out loud.



Now let's begin cracking open the "box" by varying the bass drum placement.



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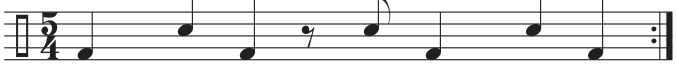
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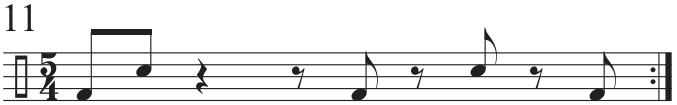
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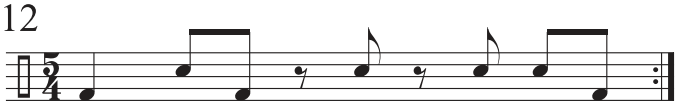
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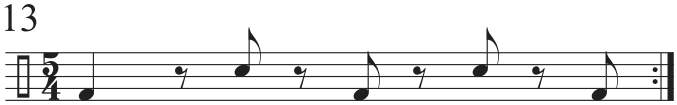
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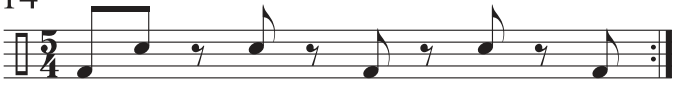
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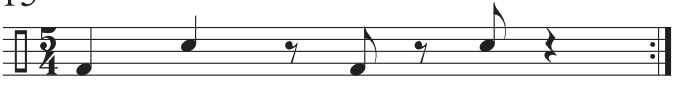
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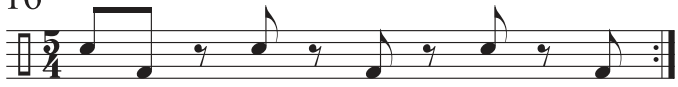
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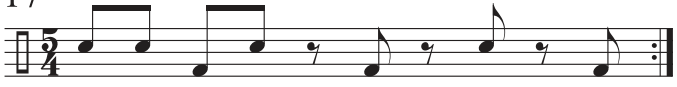
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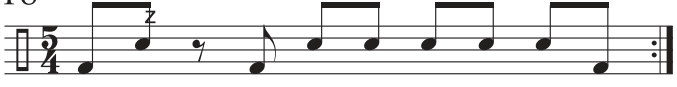
Practice each of the phrases with these ride cymbal patterns and hi-hat variations.

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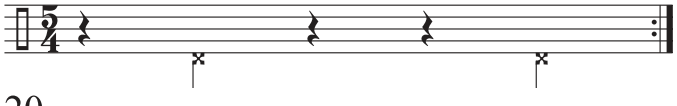
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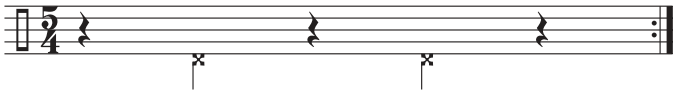
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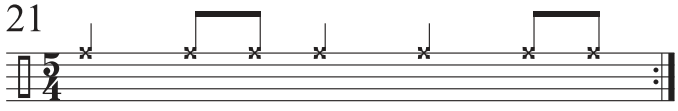

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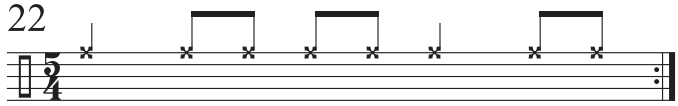

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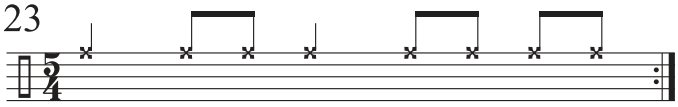

Your 5/4 grooves will start to sound hipper, less boxy, and more musical when played in longer phrases. While repeating each of the comps from above in a two-measure cycle, omit the bass drum or snare drum note that falls on the downbeat of every second measure.

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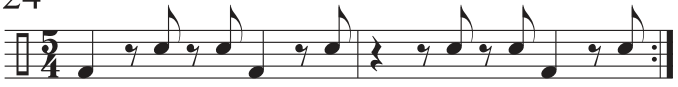
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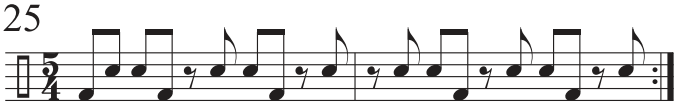
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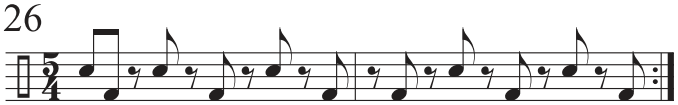
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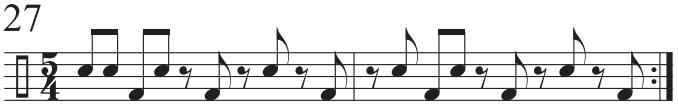
Now, while stringing four of the one-bar comps together, omit notes on the downbeat of measures 2, 3, and 4. To help you keep your place, maintain a fixed pattern with your ride cymbal and hi-hat.

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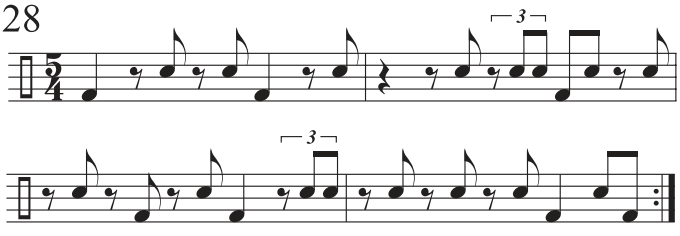
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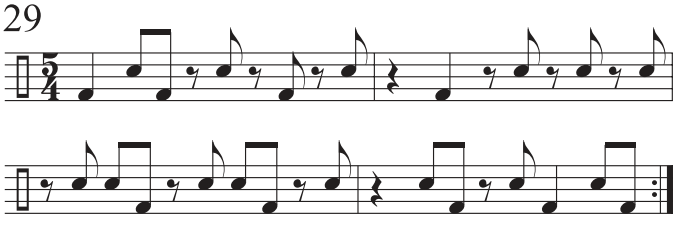
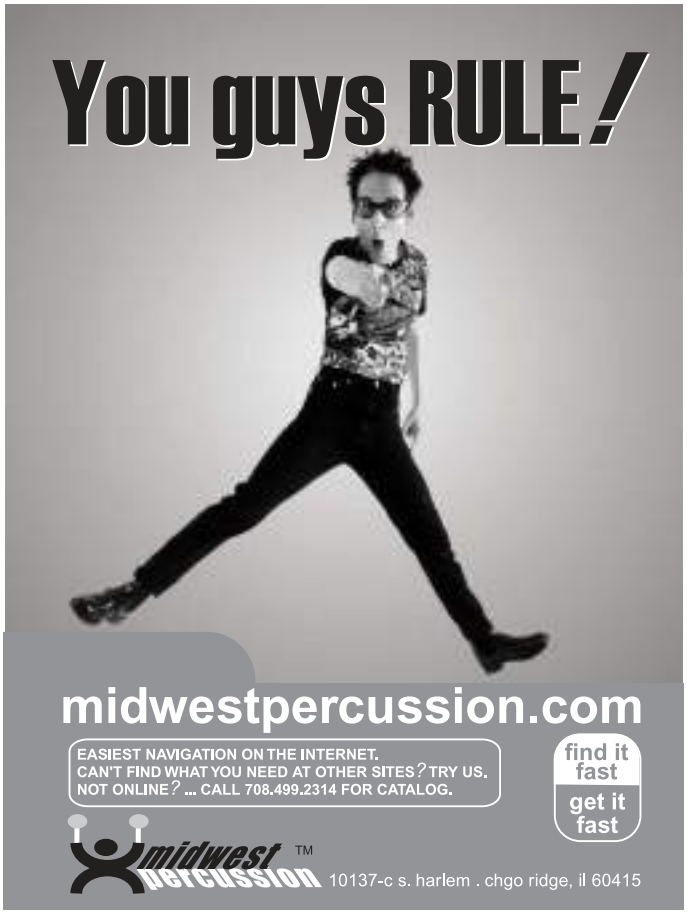

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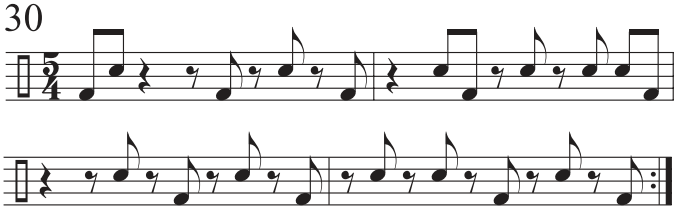
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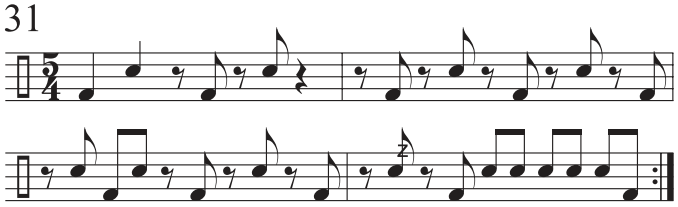
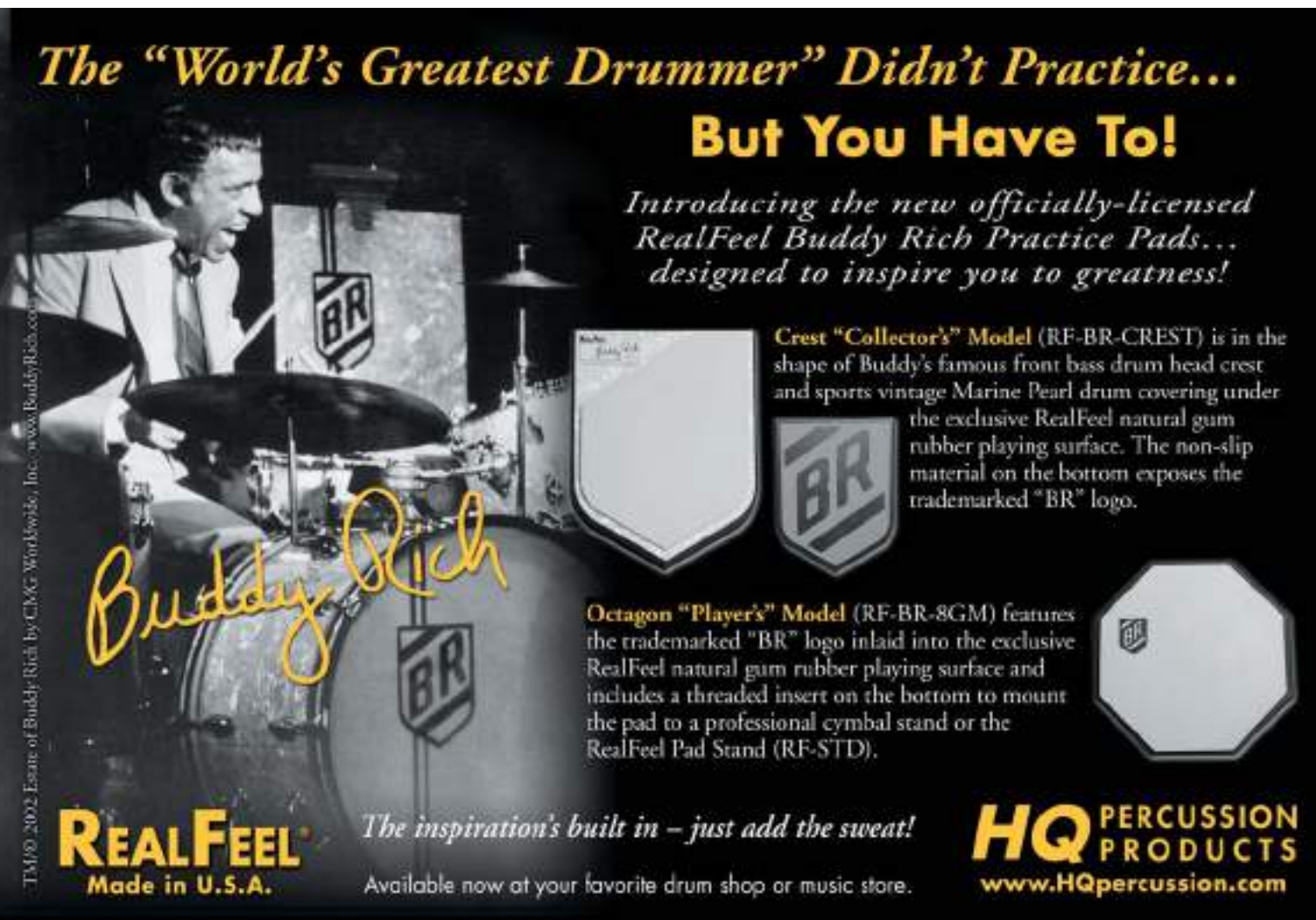

Once these phrases are flowing, experiment with loosening up your cymbal and hi-hat patterns. Allow the ride cymbal and hi-hat to "follow" the flow of the bass drum and snare drum syncopations. In essence, be less independent. While this approach will create the sensation that the time is more pliant, you must keep your place in each measure and play with metronomic solidity.

I hope these exercises help you gain a better sense of where beat "1" is and how to play it—or avoid it. Next time we'll bust open the restrictive odd-time box a little further.



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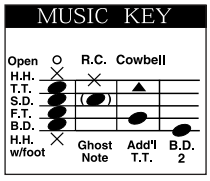
How'd They Do That?

Part 1: Solving Rock's Most Puzzling Drum Licks

by Ed Breckenfeld



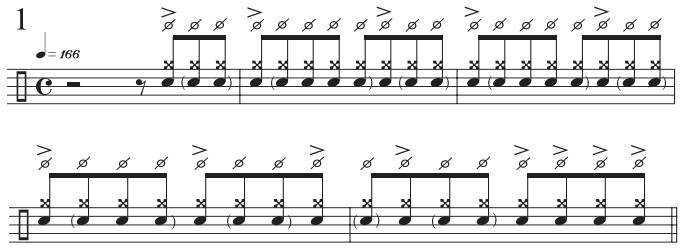
Is there a famous drum sequence that you've always wondered about, one that makes you scratch your head and think, "*What the…?*" every time you hear it? Perhaps you've tried to work it out but could never quite get it right.

Rock drumming has had its share of notoriously perplexing beats and fills through the years. In this series, we'll attempt to shed light on a few of these classic brainteasers. Some may turn out to have deceptively simple solutions. Others might reveal complicated rhythms, timing, or sticking patterns. Several have been misunderstood or played incorrectly by drummers for years.

Let's remove the shroud and try to figure out just what these guys are doing. Along the way we'll be looking at the playing of some of rock's greatest drummers. And who knows, we just might pick up a few licks to raise some eyebrows of our own.

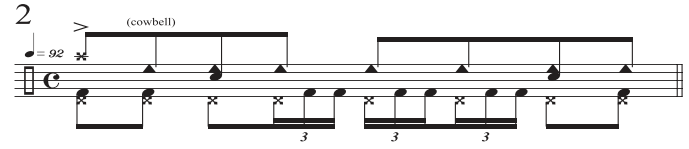
"Rock And Roll," ***Led Zeppelin IV***

Let's start with one of the all-time misdirection beginnings, from the late, great John Bonham. If you assume that Bonham started on the downbeat of the measure, then this intro is a nightmare to get through. But if you count "1…2…3" and come in on the "&" of 3, this is actually a fairly easy pattern. (Easy, that is, if you can handle fast unison 8th notes on the snare and hi-hat with accents thrown in!)

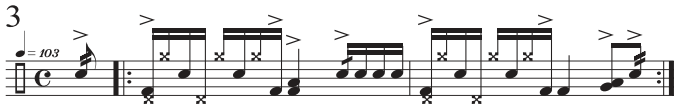


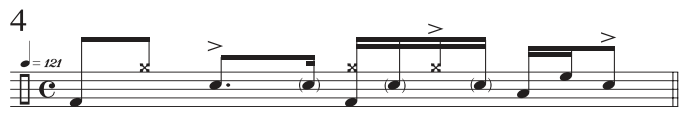
"Good Times, Bad Times," ***Led Zeppelin I***

Here's another classic John Bonham drumbeat. This one's still astonishing to hear over thirty years after he recorded it. Bonham fooled many drummers into thinking that he played double bass on this track. The illusion was created by his incredible right foot speed and control, coupled with strong 8th notes played on both his hi-hat and cowbell to fill the gaps in the bass drum triplets.

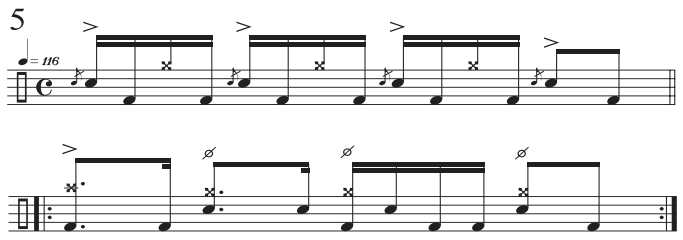


"50 Ways To Leave Your Lover," Paul Simon, ***Still Crazy After All These Years***

This is one of the most beloved drum grooves of all time, a legendary example of Steve Gadd's masterful open-handed technique and creative mind. It's also one heck of a four-way coordination challenge, with left foot hi-hat notes playing a prominent and unusual role. Despite the complexity of this pattern, Gadd's feel is relaxed and flowing, with great contrast between the accents and subtle non-accents. Not your average beat for a Top-40 pop song!

"Josie," Steely Dan, ***Aja***

Here's a subtle little fill from Jim Keltner (leading into this song's second verse) that has baffled drummers for years. But it turns out to be just a dose of Keltner's ghost-note magic. The dynamics are essential to getting this one right.

"Smells Like Teen Spirit," Nirvana, ***Nevermind***

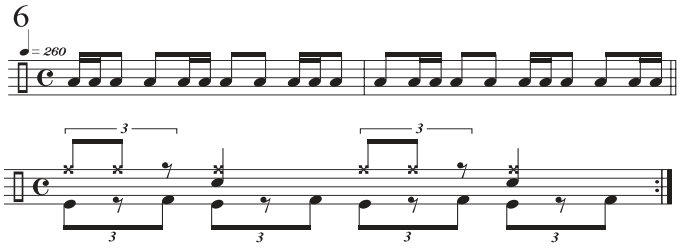
You're probably thinking that this isn't a hard lick. And it's not, if you're one of the many drummers who play the opening fill *without* including the hi-hats, or if you play the beat with 8th notes on the hi-hat instead of the correct quarter notes. Dave Grohl's greatest strength may be his ability to take familiar patterns and put his own personal twist on them. This is his most famous example.



"Hot For Teacher," Van Halen, ***1984***

Alex Van Halen's blazing opening riff in this track is played on either a low tom or an electronic pad triggering a bass drum sound. (For more information on this rhythm, see my article "Three And One—A Classic Fill" in the September 2001 issue of *Modern*

Drummer.) Most drummers assume he played the riff on his bass drums, but you can clearly hear a stick click early on in the pattern. Still, the double-bass shuffle that Alex settles into in this speed-burner is a killer in its own right.



Next month we'll investigate several other classic mystery parts, including ones by Neil Peart, Bill Bruford, and Matt Cameron. See you then!

If you have suggestions for future "How'd They Do That?" articles, you can contact Ed Breckenfeld through his Web site: www.edbreckenfeld.com.

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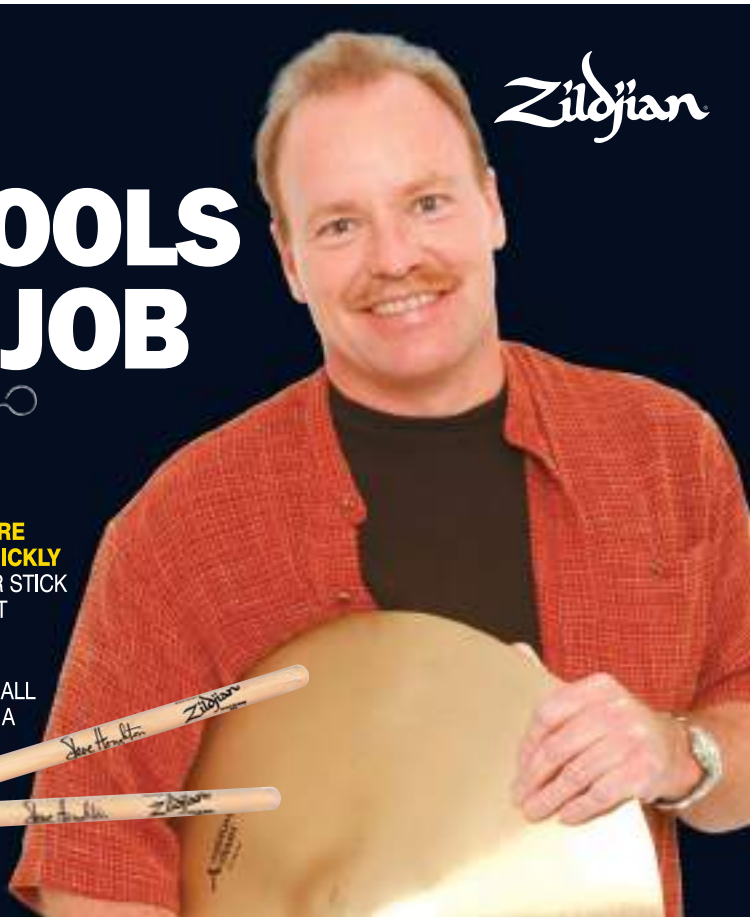

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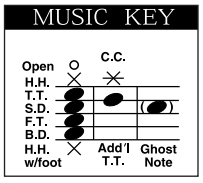
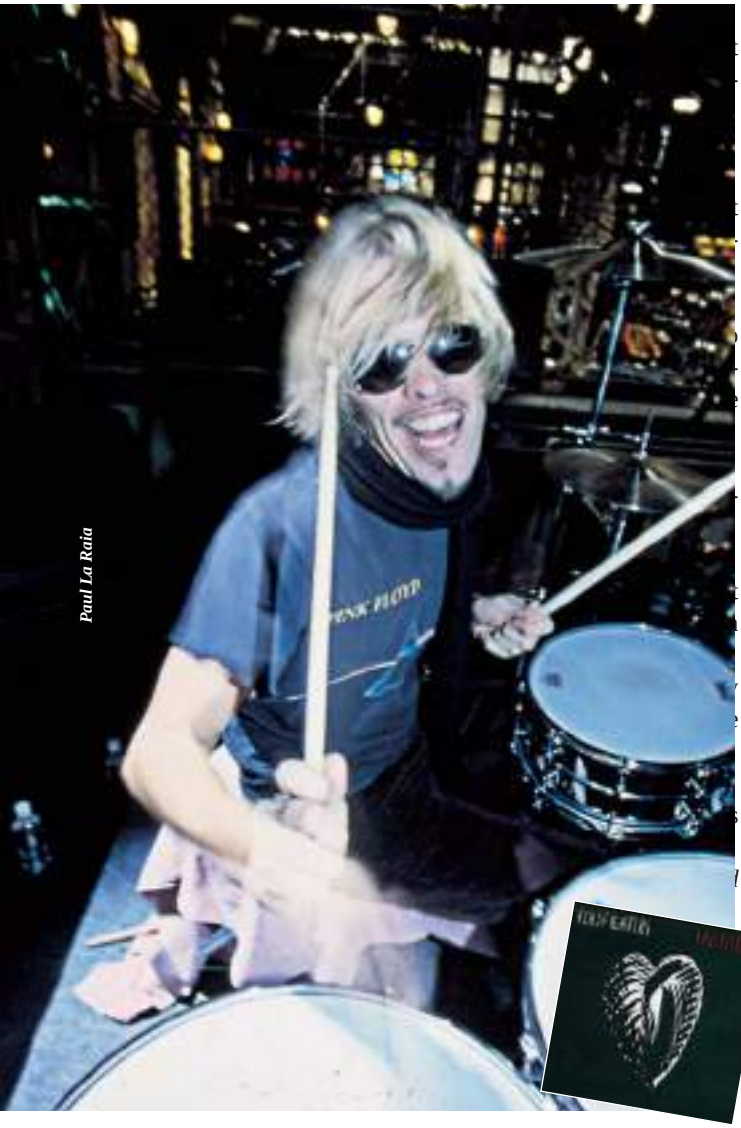
One By One

by Ed Breckenfeld



Foo Fighters are blessed with having not one, but *two* of rock's best drummers. Dave Grohl, of course, also happens to be the band's lead singer, guitarist, and songwriter. On FF's latest disc, however, he leaves the drumming in the capable hands of Taylor Hawkins, who responds with some of his finest recorded work. Here's a look at a few of Taylor's drumming highlights from *One By One*.


Paul La Raia

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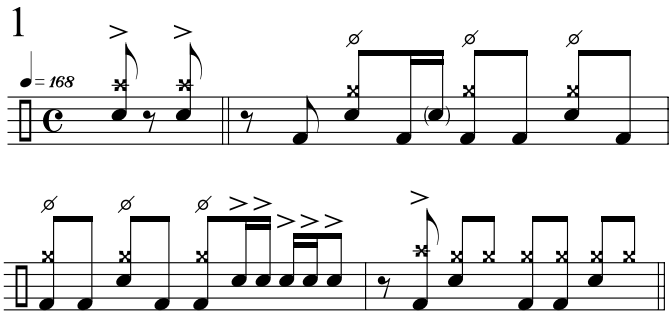

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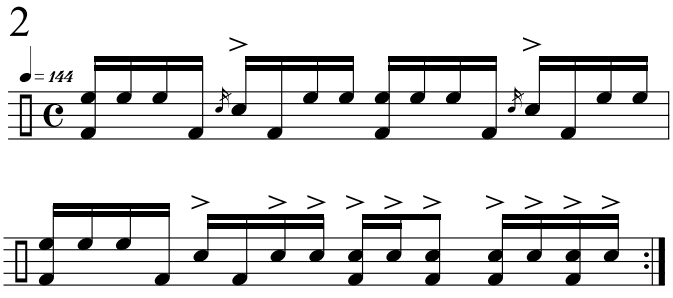

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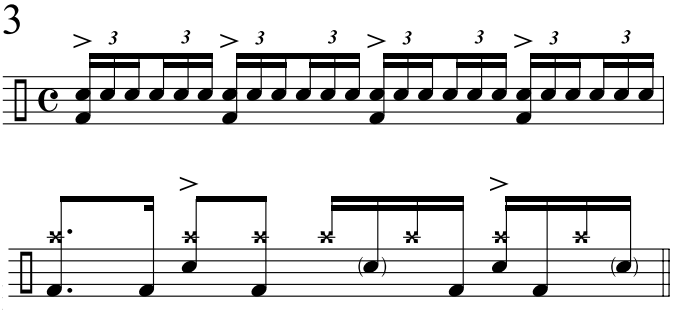
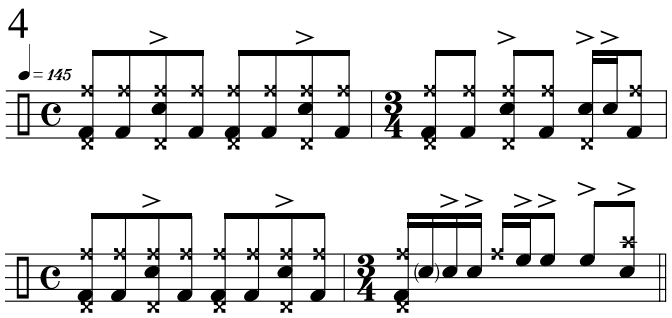


"Times Like These"

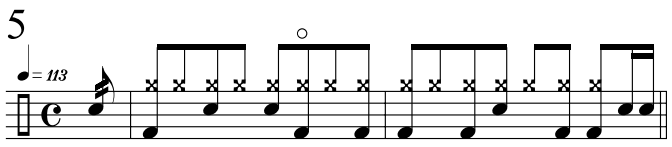
This song features an intro in 7/4 time, which I've divided into 4/4 and 3/4 for clarity. Taylor flashes his Stewart Copeland influence with a short fill that finishes in an offbeat snare/crash at the



end of this sequence.

"Disenchanted Lullaby"

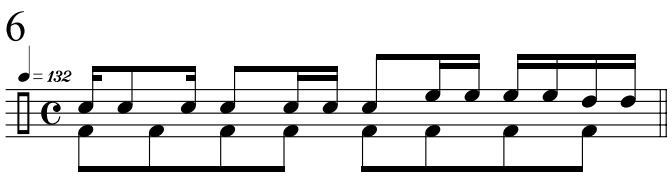
The moody intro and verse of this tune are enhanced by the syn-



copated kick and snare placement in this pattern.

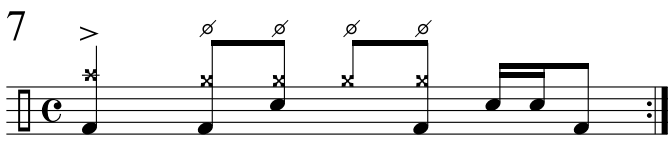
"Halo"

"Halo" contains some great drum fills, this one coming just before the first pre-chorus. Notice the bass drum 8th notes, which



add to the excitement of the fill.

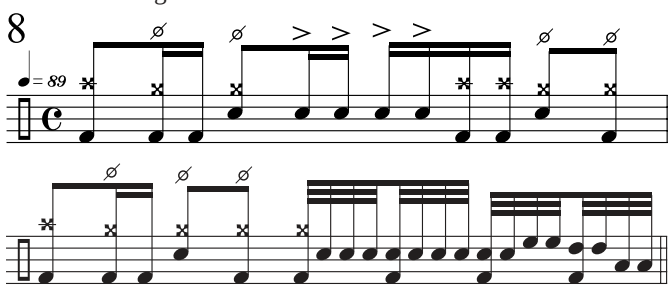
Taylor's groove for the song's chorus breaks away from his steady backbeat in the verse, as he locks in with the rhythm of Nate



Mendel's bass line.

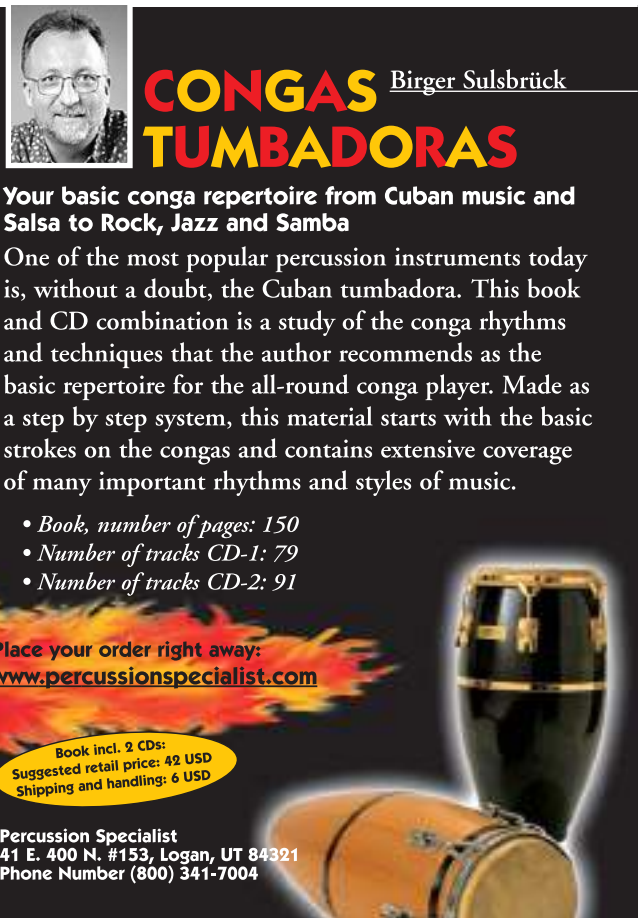
"Come Back"

The marching feel of the last chorus in this album closer lends



weight to Dave Grohl's repeated vow, "I will come back!"

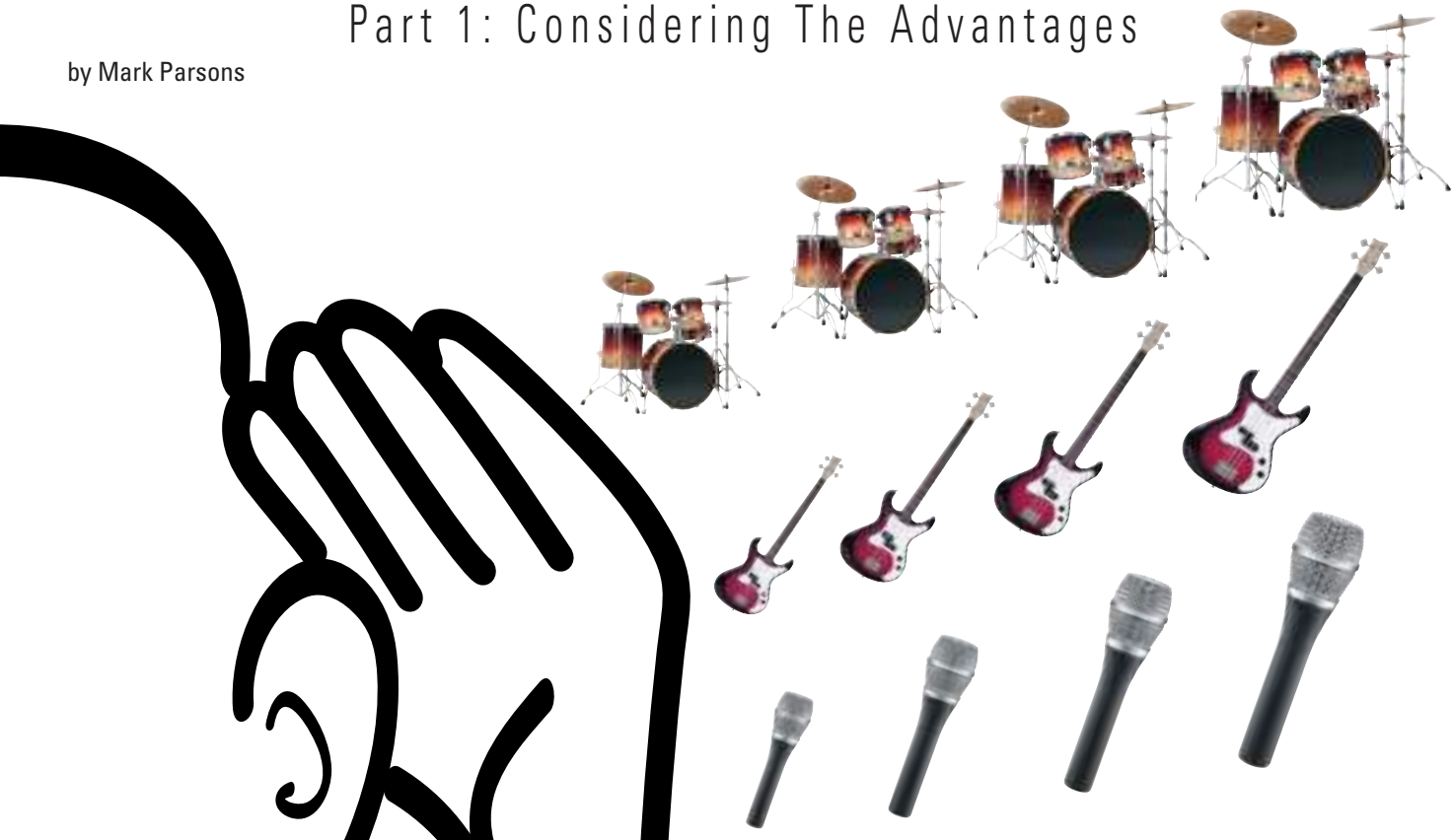
If you have questions or suggestions, you can contact Breckenfeld through his Web site at www.edbreckenfeld.com.



In-Ear Monitoring

Part 1: Considering The Advantages

by Mark Parsons



It started small, like most bad habits do. You were just doing a casual gig, and your drums were unmiked. However, at the previous gig you'd had some problems hearing the vocals, so this time you got yourself a monitor wedge, into which you put the vocals (for cue purposes only, you told yourself).

The next weekend, at a small club, you did the same, only this time you put most of the band into the wedge. Pretty soon, at bigger gigs, you were miking your kit and rocking hard. The entire band was in your monitors (you had a pair of them by that point), along with your kick and snare—so you could *feel* it, right?

Today you've reached the point where *everything* is coming through your monitor system, which now includes a pair of high-powered 2x15 wedges along with a sub-bass speaker. It's basically a small but powerful PA pointed at you, blowing your hair back as you play. Yeah, it feels great to have all that power at your command. But it's tough to get a decent monitor mix each night, you've got a backache after loading the gear, *and* your ears are still ringing in the morning.

Sound familiar?

Let's face it: It's a high-volume world out there. If you play in an amplified band, it's virtually a certainty that you will be subject to damaging noise levels. And, of course, drummers get the brunt of this acoustical onslaught. We need to monitor everyone else, at volume levels high enough to be intelligible above our drums (which are loud to begin with). But sometimes we have to put some of our drum signal into our monitors just to be able to hear ourselves over the rest of the band, who are in our monitors in the first place so we can hear *them* over the drums, and so on.

Can you say *vicious cycle*?

What?

So what can we do to stop the madness? Plenty. Beyond harping about dBs and SPLs and keeping sensible levels on stage—all of which *are* important—there are some technological aids available to solve the concussive conundrum described above.

The most prevalent solution is the use of in-ear monitors. Conceptually, IEMs are nothing new. We've all seen photos or video of Keith Moon wearing phones onstage so he could hear the pre-recorded sequence in "Won't Get Fooled Again" during his later tours with The Who. Okay, technically they were *O*EMs (*on*-ear monitors). But it's the same concept, and what it did for Moonie it can do for you. Which leads us into the *why* of the in-ear situation.

P4M personal mixer

P4HW wired bodypack

Why?

With the right setup, IEMs solve several problems at once. First, they can *isolate your monitor mix* from the general stage roar. This comes from the fact that IEMs aren't just earphones. They're ear*plugs* as well. As such, they provide a level of clarity that's almost impossible to get otherwise. When you can actually hear those quieter backing vocals or acoustic guitar parts without having to listen through the wash of sound coming from the guitar amp parked behind you, life can be a beautiful thing.

A huge benefit of the earplug function of IEMs is that they *reduce SPLs to your ear.* When you can control the volume in your monitor mix based on your personal comfort level (versus having to live with loud monitors in order to cut through the din), you're much less likely to be exposed to damaging noise levels. This is especially true if there's a brick-wall limiter between the mix and your ears, which is essential with IEMs. Yes, Virginia, you *can* get a coherent mix onstage that's only about as loud as you run your headphones at home when listening to a CD for pleasure.

As if the above benefits weren't enough, there's a sonic perk in the use of IEMs that the entire band can benefit from, which is *reduced SPLs onstage*. Go back to the scenario where you had a full monitor system blowing at you as you sat behind your miked-up drumset. Now guess where a lot of that sound also goes. Right—Into your mic's. What do you think this does for your drum sound? (Hint: nothing good.) Now multiply this by the number of people in your band, especially those with vocal mic's. Are you starting to get the picture? Ask any sound engineer what single change would make the biggest improvement to a band's live sound, and 10-to-1 he or she will say, "Go with in-ears and get rid of the stage wedges!"

Yet another nifty benefit of IEMs is *personal control of mix balance.* You don't really *have* to have this with in-ears, but it's such an obvious part of the package that few will opt to pass it up. This control usually takes one of two forms. Some drummers elect to control their entire monitor mix. They have a small but decent mixer next to them onstage (a Mackie 1604 is a fave here) containing signals from pretty much everyone in the band. With this they set up their personal monitor mix to their taste and needs. Not only can they get a total mix that they like, but they can also leave *out* parts or players that are unimportant, or distracting, or have poor time.

The other option is a "more me" setup. Briefly, this is a two-channel mix, with one channel containing the band (sans you) and the other containing your drums. You can easily adjust the balance between the two on the fly. (If you're a singer, you might opt to leave the drums within the band mix, and break your vocal out via the second channel.)

Shure E1 single-driver earphones

Let's not forget that IEM systems require *less gear to carry, set up, and strike.* Consider the size and weight of one or two wedges, possibly a subwoofer, power amps to drive them, and cables to hook them up. Compare that to a belt pack the size of a Walkman player and a pair of IEMs the size of Walkman phones. It's no contest.

Now add up and compare the *cost* of the above items. 'Nuff said.

Reality Check

All right, so IEM systems sound great in theory. But how do they work in reality? To find out exactly that, we obtained a representative IEM system to be our test model.

Although there are several fine systems on the market from a number of manufacturers, we decided to go with the Shure PSM 400 system as our trial model. Shure is a leader in this field; drummers who use Shure in-ear monitors include some of the biggest names out there. Also, the Shure IEMs come as integrated systems. The various components—mixers, bodypacks, earphones, and so forth—are designed to work together, and can be mixed and matched without compatibility issues. Finally, the PSM 400 is a mid-priced, wired system. Sure, you could pour a few thousand dollars into a top-of-the-line wireless system. But the PSM 400 is more in keeping with what the average working drummer might spend on in-ears. And the majority of drummers using IEMs choose a wired system anyway. After all, where is a drummer going to go?

We opted to use the P4HW wired bodypack and a pair of E1 earphones. List price on these products combined is $575. There is also a small (4x2) personal mixer in the PSM 400 system—the P4M—if you need one for your application. (Assuming your band has a mixer with aux sends, however, you can go "wedgeless" with just a bodypack and phones.)

The E1s ($200) are single-driver phones that use replaceable foam inserts to seal into your ear canal. They can also be used with custom earmolds, which are

available from manufacturers like Westone and Sensaphonics. (As a comparison, budget-minded E2 phones are about $100, while you can get Shure's high-end dual-driver E5 phones for $625.) The P4HW ($375) is a very small and lightweight battery-powered bodypack with three primary functions: It serves as an earphone amp, a limiter, and a two-channel mixer with three modes.

Safety First!

Before we finish this month's installment, there's an issue regarding IEMs that can't go unmentioned. Think about this: You have a pair of transducers *in* your ear canals, sending audio to your eardrums with extremely high efficiency. What would happen if something went wrong at the mixing board or elsewhere, and a very loud signal were accidentally sent to your monitors? That's right, you could suffer irreparable hearing damage. In order to prevent this, it's imperative that a limiter be used between the sound source (the mixer) and the bodypack. One option is to wire up an outboard limiter into the signal chain. In the case of the P4HW, it has a basic limiter built into it. But whether your in-ear system has an outboard or onboard limiter, make sure that you always use it.

So much for an examination of the benefits and the structure of an in-ear monitoring system. Next time, we'll get into the nitty-gritty of how such a system works, and what you can do to tailor it to your specific needs. See you then!

For more information on in-ear monitors, check out the following Web sites.

DBX
www.dbxpro.com

ETYMOTIC RESEARCH
www.etymotic.com

FUTURE SONICS
www.futuresonics.com

SAMSON
www.samsontech.com

SENSAPHONICS
www.sensaphonics.com

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The Ergonomics Of Drumming

by Steve Holland

Everyone fears the possibility of a debilitating medical condition. But for drummers, such a condition can mean losing a hobby, a career, or simply something they've invested much time, effort, and passion into.

The main ailments that plague drummers are tendinitis and carpal tunnel syndrome, which affect the wrists, hands, and arms. However, a drummer's legs, thighs, and back are also at risk of damage if care is not taken to protect them. Fortunately, these problems are easy to avoid if drummers set up their drumkits comfortably, and then play in a relaxed manner. Following are some guidelines to help you avoid bad habits that could lead to injury. They can also help to improve your playing ability.

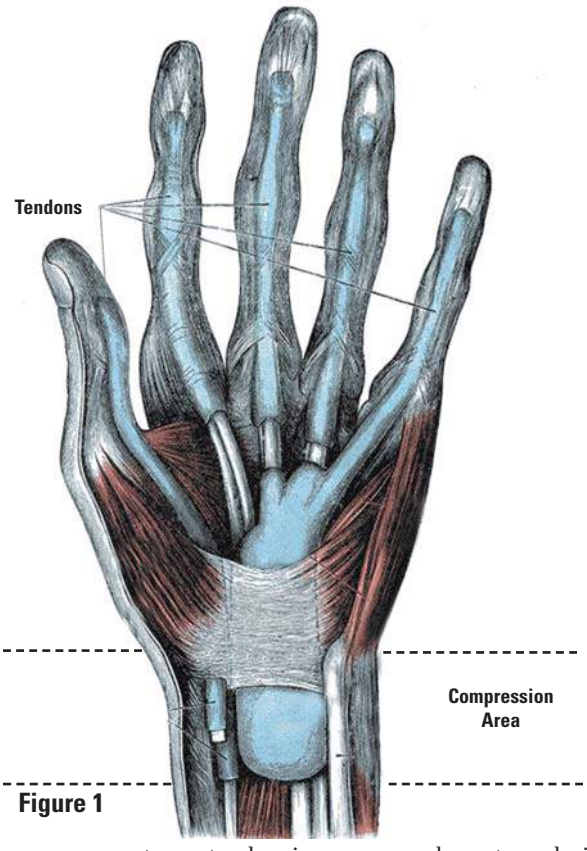

Figure 1

Grip Is Everything

The grip you use to hold your drumsticks can be the cause of a lot of problems. Whether you use traditional or matched grip, the same rule applies: *A relaxed grip is the best grip*. Holding onto the stick tightly causes the muscles in the hand, wrist, and arm to tense up, which can cause immediate pain and long-term damage. Tension is what causes the tendons to compress in the wrist, creating the painful condition known as tendinitis. (See Figure 1.) A simple rule to follow is that your grip should be just tight enough to provide control over the stick, but no more.

Playing with your hands more relaxed will increase your agility, speed, and endurance, as well as your control. However, it's important to make sure that your gripping technique is correct—not sloppy or uncomfortable—before making this adjustment. Finding a good teacher to demonstrate the proper technique and to correct any tendencies you may have to hold the stick incorrectly is the key here.

Appropriate Power

A rigid grip can cause many problems on its own. But when it's combined with hitting too hard, you have a dangerous mix. Despite repeated claims that "true rock 'n' roll drummers" need to hit so hard that they put holes in their drumheads, this can cause a lot of problems. And it's not just a phenomenon of rock music, either. It's becoming prevalent in every style of music. Just to be clear, the hard hitting I'm referring to here is the kind that's completely excessive, digs the stick into the head, and shows a lack of technique.

First of all, you need to realize that there is a point at which hitting harder will no longer change the sound of the drum. The simple fact is that hitting harder does not always equal sounding louder. At that point, all you're doing is wasting energy. And let's not forget that constantly replacing sticks and heads can get quite expensive. For the drummer making average pay, this is not an affordable option. *Then* add the fact that the immense strain placed on the wrists, arms, and hands is a sure road to injury.

I'm not implying that hitting hard is *always* a negative thing. If done correctly (and not pushed past the threshold of affecting the sound), hitting hard adds dynamics and intensity to the music. The key to doing it right is, again, relaxation (assuming you're using proper grip as described in the previous section). As the volume increases, there is an overall tendency to tense up. Building up to a certain speed or volume *gradually* is the only way to correct this. Focusing on keeping the arms, wrists, and hands relaxed while practicing will, in time, allow for comfortable playing at the desired volume levels. This is the key to safely playing at these levels—especially over long periods of time.

The Drum Throne

Throne height is a very important—yet often overlooked—aspect of a drummer's setup. Sitting too high can result in back pain, as well as possible injury to the thighs and ankles. Sitting too low can lead to knee problems and, again, back and ankle problems. A good starting point is to have the seat at a height such that the thighs are about parallel to the floor. (See Figure 2.) Many drummers and teachers recommend that the height should create a slight downward slope from the waist to the knees (no more than about a 20° angle with the floor), and that the drummer should keep a straight, aligned posture. This arrangement allows the legs to be light on the pedals, but at the same time uninhibited by the edge of the

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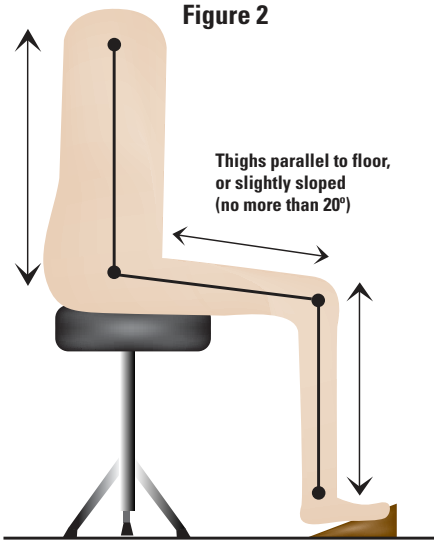
drum throne. It applies to both heel-up and heel-down playing.

Another important consideration is simply how comfortable the throne is. Too little padding can result in fatigue and pain in the lower back. Too much padding can create poor support and make the throne feel unstable. The best way to choose a throne is to sit on as many as possible, and find one that retains stability while being comfortable enough to sit on for hours. Many thrones have backrests to help ease the strain on the back, and this is an excellent option.

Figure 2



Position Of Drums And Cymbals

Setting up your kit simply so that it *looks* good often forces you to stretch and strain in order to reach a cymbal or a second floor tom. The simple solution is to throw away the rules of what a drumset should look like, and put everything where it makes sense and is comfortable for *you*. Begin by setting up just the throne to the proper height for you. Then sit down as if you were going to play, facing your "audience." Wherever your feet are, that's where the hi-hat and bass drum pedals should be placed. Next, add in the snare drum and the ride cymbal, and get them into a comfortable position. Then add in the other cymbals and the toms. Move things around until everything is in reach and can be played without any stretching or straining.

Remember these simple guidelines will ensure a lifetime of playing, and a more comfortable and enjoyable experience along the way.

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Teaching The Younger Student

by David Miele

Studying privately with a competent instructor is an important part of most musicians' development. In an ideal situation, a motivated student pairs up with a teacher who has lots of professional experience. The success of the lessons is in direct relation to the love of the instrument felt by both the student and the teacher. That love fuels the lessons.

But where does that love come from? We've all heard stories of child prodigies, from Mozart to Tony Royster Jr. Still, it's unusual to find a young child who exhibits a serious devotion to their instrument and to the learning process. As a result, some teachers shy away from younger students, preferring to spend time with older, more focused students.

Children can certainly be harder to work with than mature students. But if you have the temperament, working with kids can be very rewarding. Here are a few ideas on how to begin a teaching practice, with an eye to working with younger students.

Children can certainly be harder to work with than mature students. But if you have the temperament, working with kids can be very rewarding.

Check Out Music Shops

If the music shops in your area offer lessons, ask to meet with their drum instructors. They may be some of those "adults only" teachers, or they may simply get more inquiries than they can handle, and thus could send some students your way. If the store doesn't offer lessons, talk to someone in charge about the idea. It's well worth offering a small percentage of your lesson fee to the store, considering the amount of young students you're likely to come in contact with.

Because a drumset is a big purchase, many parents buy sets for their youngsters on the condition that they *must* take lessons. If you're the teacher who can meet that condition, you can establish a teaching practice fairly quickly. If the shop owner isn't interested, he or she may at least allow you to hang a small sign or leave a few business cards.

Spend What You Can Afford On Advertising

You can't very well leave a business card if you don't have any. Unfortunately, a phone number scribbled down on a slip of paper is much more likely to end up in the garbage than will a small stack of business cards. Given desktop publishing and online services available today, creating such cards is relatively inexpensive.

Newspaper ads can cost a bit more, but if you have the cash, they can be well worth it. A great time of year to run ads is in September, when parents and their youngsters (from kindergarten to high school) are in a learning frame of mind. Many young people begin music lessons at this time.

In The Teaching Studio

Once you've managed to obtain a small roster of young students, it's important to keep them interested and motivated. First, be sure to treat each student individually. It's amazing how many teachers never sit down and discuss exactly what a young student's goals are, and what kind of music he or she listens to and wants to play. You'd be surprised at some of the ideas kids have about music. I always make certain to discuss these things right off the bat, and I encourage students to bring in the music they'd like to learn.

Avoid Playing Too Much

Good teachers never play too much during a lesson. You should only play when it's necessary to demonstrate a particular

exercise or example. The lesson is the student's time to play. No one wants to watch you show off for half an hour when they're supposed to be developing their own skills.

On the other hand, watching great drumming can help keep young students interested. Along with a stereo, I also have a TV in my studio, and I make use of numerous drum videos. A few minutes dedicated to watching a great player and then discussing his or her performance is time well spent. Not only is it educational, it's also a great motivator for youngsters.

Maintain Variety

If your lesson plan covers several different areas, you won't need to spend frustrating time on one or two particular items. You also won't overload your students with too many different examples within one subject area. The aforementioned videos are a great way to maintain variety in your lessons. They keep things moving and serve as a break from the mental work.

Another effective activity that strengthens a young student's ear is the call-and-response technique, where you play rhythms of increasing length and complexity and have your student repeat them back. This works well with students of all ages and ability levels. I currently have a three-year-old student who does this extremely well. For more advanced students, you can have them *write* out the rhythms as you play them.

Also reserve time to discuss your student's drumset. Be ready to answer questions about gear selection, tuning, and maintenance. I once had a student who hated the sound of his bass drum. He assumed mine sounded better because it was more expensive. He was amazed when I told him to put a pillow in his drum for muffling. No one had ever mentioned this common procedure to him. He came back in great spirits because he now loved the sound of his bass drum. This kind of thing is important, because no student will remain motivated on an instrument that sounds bad.

Expose Your Student To Other Areas

Spend some time introducing your student to brushes. Many younger students have never even held a pair, and they might be interested in seeing what can be done with them. Ask your students if they'd like to incorporate piano or guitar into their studies (assuming you have some skills on these instruments yourself). Playing a second instrument can be very beneficial, and knowledge of the fundamentals of music theory makes drummers better musicians.

Personal Benefits

By keeping your lessons varied, fun, and specific to a young student's interests, you can create a teaching experience that's just as fulfilling with an eight-year-old as you can with a twenty-year-old in love with the instrument. I've also noticed that explaining things in the simplest possible terms solidifies *my* understanding of the fundamentals, and helps me develop my own philosophical approach to the instrument. I find some of the simpler elements that I teach over and over coming out in more complex ways in my own playing. As a result, my students are better off, and I'm better off. You can be too.

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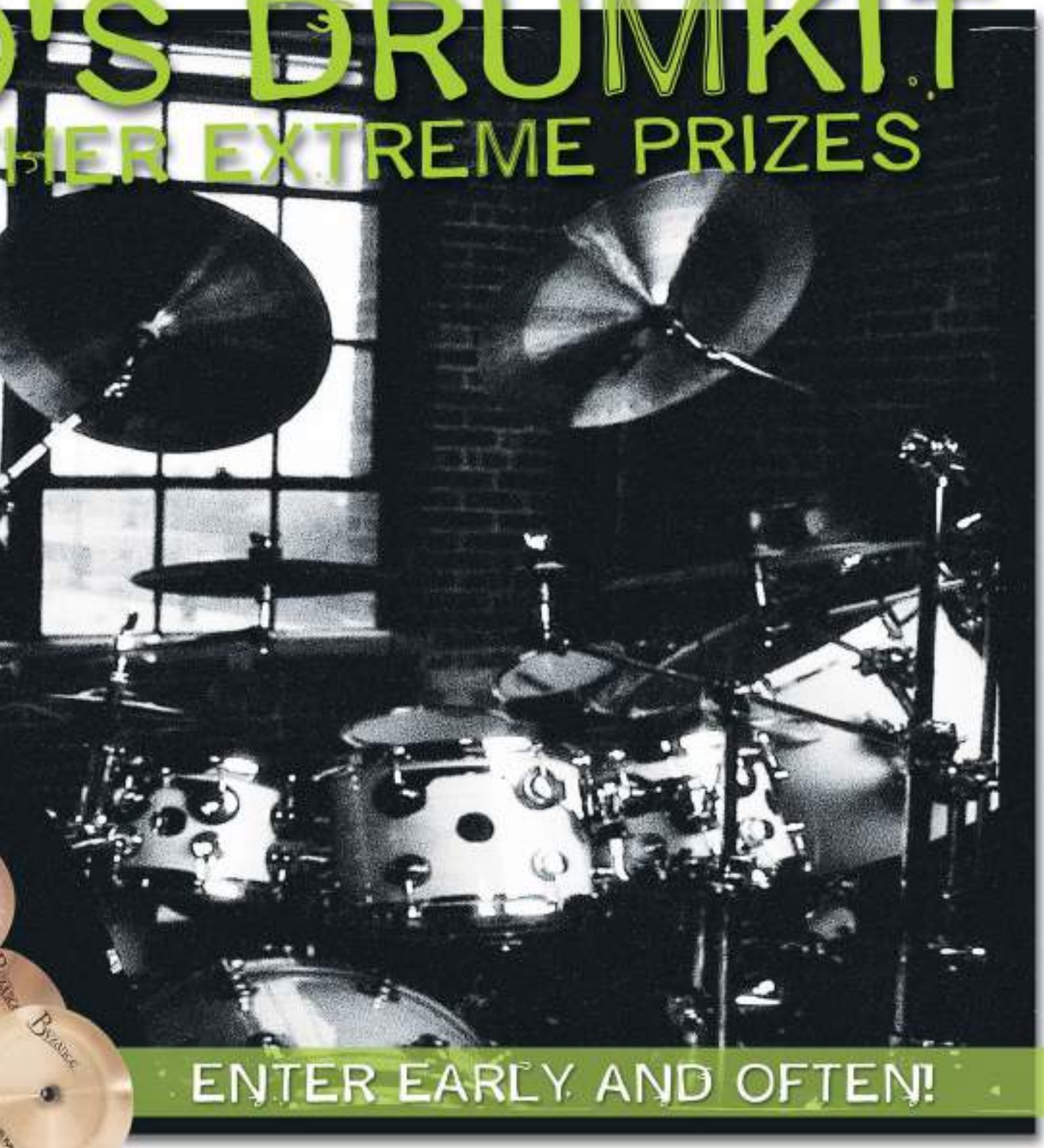

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Using Samples And Loops

Live Applications Made Easy

by Dan Garvin

Much of today's recorded music incorporates samples. This poses a challenge for live performers when it comes to reproducing those samples on stage. More and more, the responsibility for triggering these samples is falling on the drummer. Fortunately, there are ways to add samples to a band's live performance easily and relatively inexpensively.

Samples And Loops

The terms "sample" and "loop" are often used interchangeably, but they actually mean two different things. A sample is a short recording of sound. This could be anything: a drum groove, a vocal or guitar part, a speech, the sound of rain, or the impact of a car crash. A loop is a sample that repeats continuously. These are usually drum or percussion grooves, but they can be anything imaginable. So, a loop is a repeating sample, while a sample is only sometimes used as a loop.

Adding samples to a live performance is a great way to expand a band's sound palette, and can help make the performance stand out.

Making The Samples

Material for samples can be obtained in two ways. First, it can be taken from a piece of already-recorded material. This material can come from an existing recording (think of all the songs that use samples of James Brown grooves) or from one of the many "loop CDs" available today (some of which are also available as downloads online). While sampling artists' recordings for a commercial release can have legal repercussions, most "pre-made" loops are released royalty-free, expressly for this purpose.

The second method of obtaining samples is to create source material from scratch. The sample can be made by directly recording whatever is desired (such as a player's own grooves), or by altering and combining pre-made samples with additional custom-recorded material. This can all be done in a professional recording studio or simple home studio, or on a computer.

There are several relatively inexpensive computer programs available for making original loops from scratch. Also, digital multi-track recorders have editing capabilities that make it easy to sample bits of recordings (or make original ones) and then copy the pieces one after another to make loops. This has been done on reel-to-reel recorders for years, by copying parts and splicing them together. (Check out the drums on Tom Petty's "You Don't Know How It Feels" or Toto's "Africa.")

The Gear

Although using samples and loops in a recording is easy, getting them to the stage can be another matter. The *quickest* way to deal with the problem is to spend a couple thousand dollars for a top-of-the-line sampler, a triggering device, and an in-ear monitoring system. And about 1% of performing acts do it that way. The other 99% of us need something simpler, easier to use, and less expensive.

Fortunately, there are several samplers on the market that cost only a couple hundred dollars. They generally don't have the CD-quality sound of the top-notch machines, but they can do an ade-

quate job for most situations. Most have a limited amount of internal memory, but they also have slots for media cards for storing much more information. Some also have onboard effects similar to their big brothers.

For those with even more limited funds, most basic sampling can be done with a CD recorder, a minidisk recorder, or even a tape deck. The disadvantage of these machines is that they cannot take a "snippet" of music and turn it into loop patterns themselves, the way a sampler can. A computer or a studio machine that can run the loop endlessly while it's recorded on CD-R, minidisk, or tape work best for this method.

Some computer programs will let you "rip" a snippet of sound, edit it, and turn it into a loop yourself. Use the headphone jack from your computer or the regular outputs of any other sample- or loop-creating device to go right into the analog inputs of the CD-R, minidisk, or tape recorder.

Three helpful hints: First, record an extra one or two minutes of any loop that will run the length of a song so that it doesn't run out if the guitar player takes an extra-long solo or the singer decides to tell a story over the intro. Second, just as if it were a sampler, make sure to note the track or index number for each sample next to the appropriate song on your set list before you go on stage. Third, portable players (especially those with backlit LCD screens) will do the job for live performance, but make sure to use the plug-in power rather than batteries that might die right in the middle of a song.

Connecting And Monitoring

Depending on the PA system the band is using, hearing the sample on stage can be accomplished in a number of ways. First, if you're using a monitor system, the outputs of the sample-generating machine can be run directly into the monitor and front-of-house systems via direct boxes (also known as "DIs." Ask your sound engineer). From there, the sounds will be sent to your monitor speaker and those of the rest of the band. This is the easiest way to control how much of the sample the players hear versus how much the audience hears.

If there isn't a PA or monitor system to speak of (as is often the case in small clubs), a keyboard or bass amplifier will do the job. It may be best to split the outputs and use two amplifiers, one for the audience and one to hear the sample onstage.

Using either method described above will work to get the sample to the audience. But they may be lacking when it comes to you and the band "locking in" with a loop. Many drummers use headphones to hear their samples. The best headphones for this purpose are the closed-cup isolation-type models available from several manufacturers. Then there are in-ear monitors. These can be a bit of an investment, but in my experience they've been worth every penny. The actual in-ear "phones" are all that are needed, not the expensive belt pack and connectors. The earphones can be plugged into any headphone jack, usually requiring no more than a standard mini-

plug-to-$^1/_4$" headphone adapter. It may be best to run the machine's headphone output through a pocket-sized headphone amplifier first, to provide the necessary volume control without affecting the volume going to the audience. This can be especially useful in rehearsals, when there often isn't a monitor for the drummer.

Getting The Most From Samples

It's important to remember that all of the sample-generating devices we've discussed are stereo units, consisting of a left and right channel. However, it's rare that a sample absolutely *needs* to be in stereo. This means there are actually two usable "tracks" of audio, which opens up a whole new world to the sampling drummer. No longer does a drummer need a percussion-oriented sample in order to stay in sync with it. The samples can be keyboard parts, vocal parts, bass lines, or anything else imaginable.

To set this up, think of the sampler as a multi-track recorder with two distinct tracks. One channel (or track) can be dedicated to a click track, while the remaining track can feature a non-percussion-oriented sample that would otherwise be difficult to groove with. When recording a sample into the machine, pan the main part (to be heard by the audience) completely to one side while panning the click completely to the other. This will dedicate one output channel to the audience, and the other to the player.

Another usage of this "multi-track" concept is to layer parts by putting one part on each track and having the sound engineer mix them for the audience. Either way, for those using the CD/minidisk/tape recorder method, using the "multi-track" approach allows overdubbed parts that run though an entire song to become a part of the live show. Just be sure to start the song in sync with the recorded parts! Otherwise, the band could have a Milli Vanilli moment and be (for instance) one measure behind the overdubbed parts for the whole song. Also, when you're "programming" your

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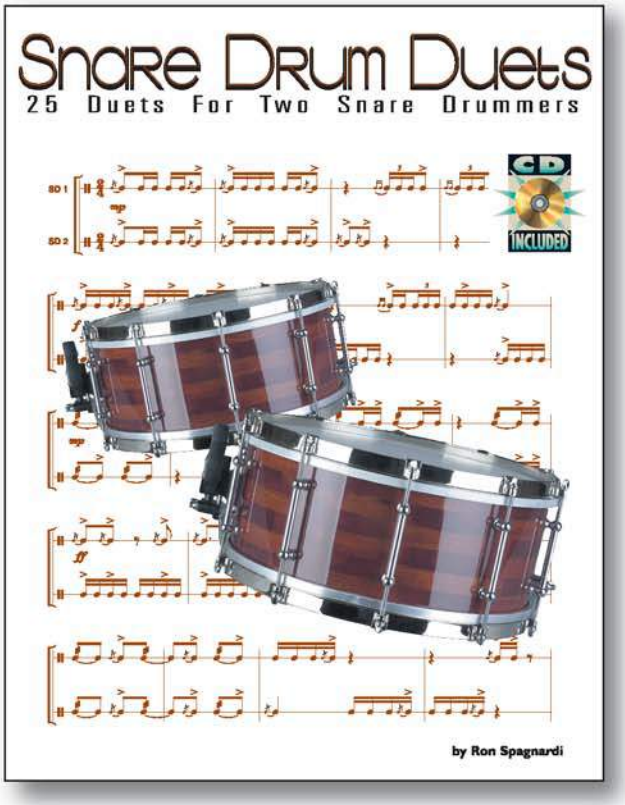

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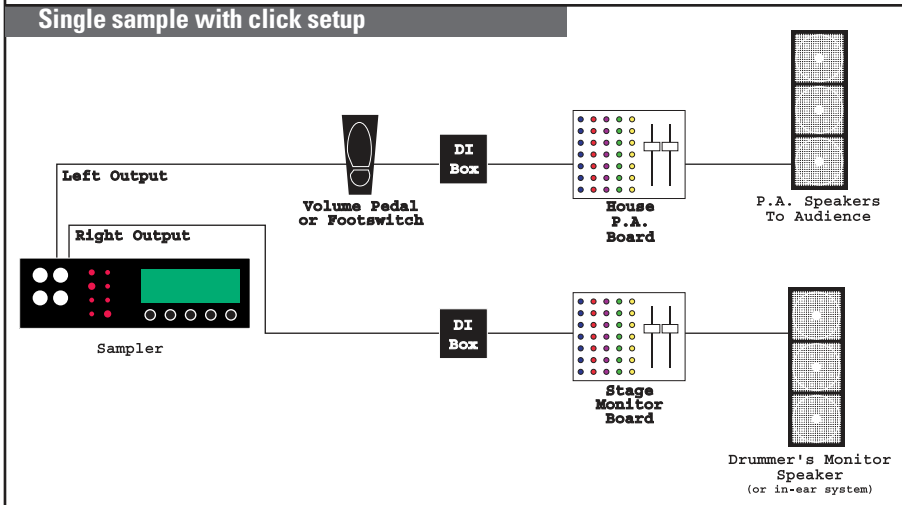
Samples And Loops

samples and loops, be sure to pan the click tracks for all samples to the same side, so that the click and the samples always go to the right places.

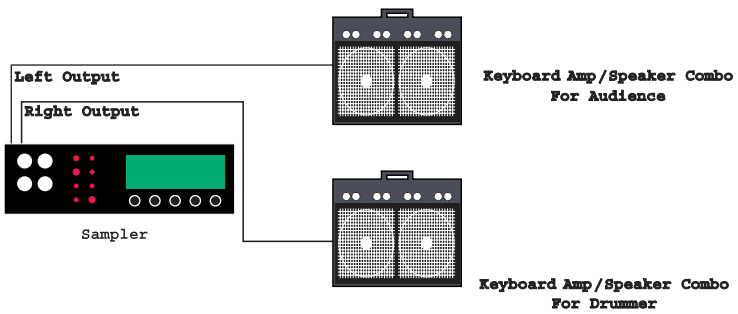
In-ear monitors or headphones are almost a necessity when using a click track, in order to avoid the audience hearing the sound of the click coming from the stage. If the machine is set up to be split between a sample and a click but

Connection Options

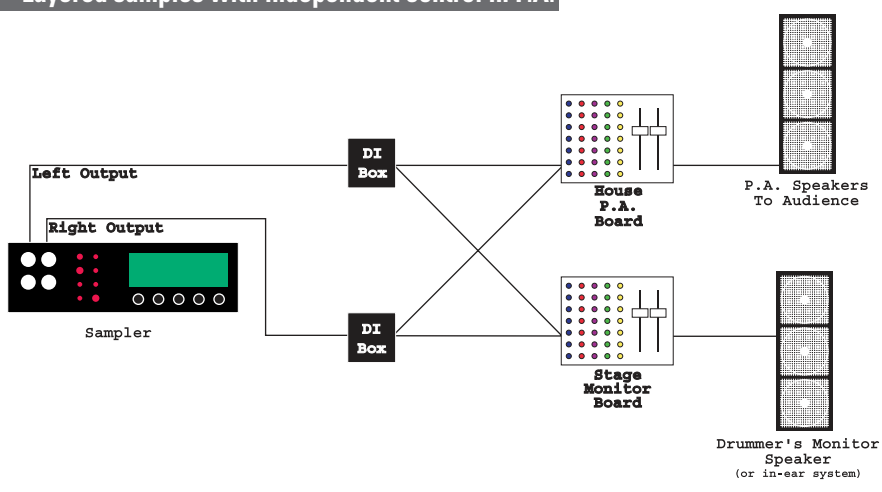
Single sample with click setup



Single sample with no P.A. setup



Layered samples with independent control in P.A.



the sample for a song doesn't require a click, just record the sample to both tracks simultaneously by panning it to the center. This way everyone will simply be hearing the same thing.

Controlling The Loops

Starting and stopping loops can easily become a juggling act unless the samples are set up for easy use. Triggering pads (such as the Roland Octapad or the DrumKat) are made to allow the player to choose from several samples, and to easily layer them during performance. This MIDI interface can be set up with many different parameters, depending on the player's needs. For example, striking a pad could start a loop that will run until the pad is struck again to stop it. Or, the interface could be set up so that it will not layer samples on top of one another. Instead, one sample may only be stopped by triggering another sample (or a "blank" sample). Finally, if the sampler has enough available memory, and if the sample is only needed for a short period, just sample the required amount and set the sampler to stop on its own, without looping.

Another way of controlling the sampler, which also works well for the CD/minidisk/tape method, is the use of on/off or A/B footswitches (where "B" is left unconnected). Run only the "sample" channel from the machine through the switch, while the "click" channel still runs straight to the drum monitor. Pressing the footswitch controls the sample going to the audience, but does not affect the click that's being used to keep things in sync until the sample is turned on again. A variation of this is to use a volume pedal, such as those used for keyboards or guitars (including "passive" models that don't require a power source). Volume pedals are more versatile than switches, because they allow for more expressive control of the sample (such as fading it up or down) but can still be cut off fairly quickly like an on/off switch.

Whether you use a footswitch or a volume pedal, the signal from the sampler simply runs through the unit on its way to the direct-box, the mixing board, and ultimately the audience. Using pedals in this way usually works best when the loop can run uninterrupted through the entire song, to be brought in and out of the mix as needed without relying on the soundman to do it.

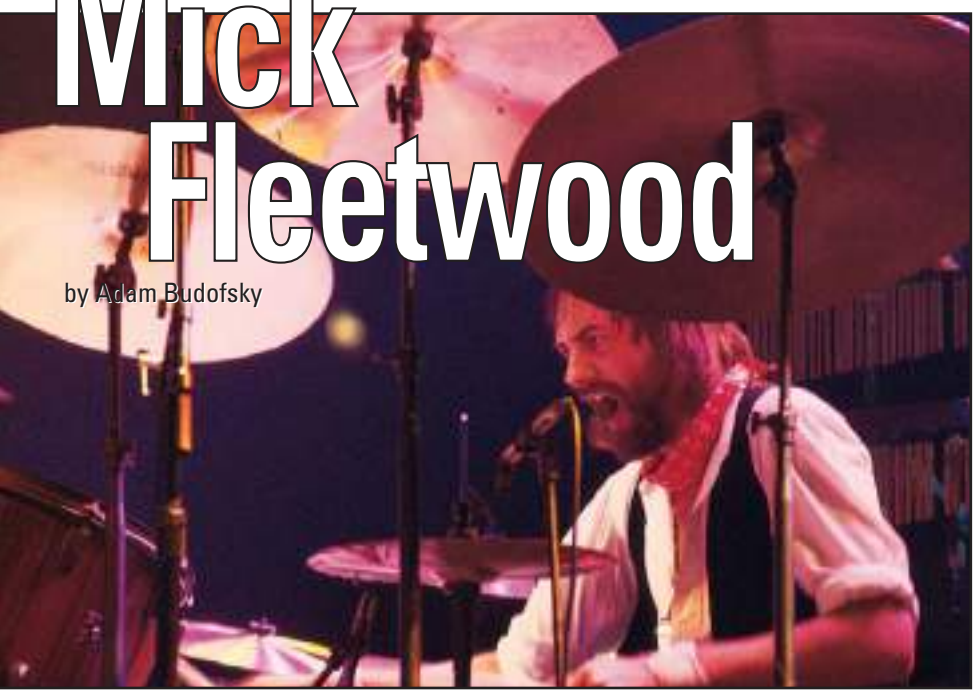
A sample can also be used *strictly* as a click track, with nothing going to the audience. Sample a click track or metronome at the correct tempo, or find/make a loop at the correct tempo with just the right feel to lock in the groove for each song. No more arguments over tempo!

Adding samples to a live performance is a great way to expand a band's sound palette, and can help make the performance stand out. Larger tours have turned to sampling as a way of adding to the sound of the band or to reproduce recordings without adding bandmembers or lip-syncing to a recording. Add that badly needed tambourine to the chorus, or have that cool five-man percussion groove going underneath your drum parts. The drummer's job is to serve the music, so be sure to use all that technology has to offer.

Dan Garvin began playing and teaching professionally in the Baltimore/Washington area in 1992, while studying jazz and classical percussion at Towson State University. Dan was a founding member of SR-71, and was with the band from 1996 to 2001, culminating in the gold-selling release Now You See Inside *on RCA Records. In 2001 he toured and recorded with Ninedays, also supporting a gold-selling major-label debut. His attention then turned to session work and a return to teaching. Dan uses Vic Firth sticks, Sabian cymbals, and Pearl drums.*

Mick Fleetwood

by Adam Budofsky



It seems as if Fleetwood Mac has always been there. Like the pyramid on the back of a dollar bill, even when you're not thinking about them, they're close by, representing something valuable, historic, and a little mysterious. Fleetwood Mac's songs, especially the enormously popular mid-'70s singles like "Go Your Own Way," "Landslide," "Over My Head," "Rhiannon," and "Don't Stop," are part of the landscape: in heavy rotation on various radio formats, covered by current hit-makers (like the Dixie Chicks)—even in political campaigns.

Of course, Fleetwood Mac hasn't *really* always been with us. With roots in John Mayall's seminal Blues Breakers, Fleetwood Mac was born of the same blues-obsessed mid-'60s British rock revolution that spawned The Rolling Stones, The Yardbirds, and Led Zeppelin. When Mayall's lead guitarist, Eric Clapton, decided to cut short a self-imposed hiatus, his replacement, Peter Green, was out of a gig, and decided to start his own band.

The better for us. After they added guitarists Jeremy Spencer and, later, Danny Kirwan, the band indisputably played the British blues better than any of their peers. Green was a rock God. Kirwan and Spencer were tremendously talented. Mick Fleetwood and John McVie were the ultimate rhythm section—a fact supported by Peter Green's naming the band after *them*.

And they were visionaries. Driven by Green's expanded consciousness and impeccable taste, within two years the Mac were moving way beyond the style they epitomized, and into new realms of rock experimentation. Numbers like "The Green Manalishi," "Albatross," "Black Magic Woman," and "Oh Well" were imitated, and in some instances copied outright, by the top hit-makers of the day. But eventually Green, then Spencer, then Kirwan couldn't handle the spotlight, and the band entered a productive if less successful period in the early '70s.

Then the weird and wonderful happened. A pair of LA singer-songwriters, Lindsey Buckingham and Stevie Nicks, joined the veteran rhythm section, which had by then been augmented by McVie's keyboard-playing wife, Christine. It was magic, a perfect musical combination realized at the perfect time. Multi-*multi*-million-selling albums like *Fleetwood Mac*, *Rumours*, and *Tusk* turned the players into household names, the details of their soap-opera lifestyle as famous as their songs.

Of course, nothing lasts forever. Solo careers and disillusionment sent the band spinning for a few years, though Mick Fleetwood continually pushed to keep the name aloft. In 1997, the highly unlikely happened: That famous lineup reconvened for a hugely successful tour. Today, a double best-of CD has primed the pump for the first new studio album by the Fleetwood/McVie/Buckingham/Nicks lineup in fifteen years. (Christine McVie has opted out this time around.)

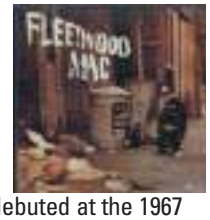
And Mick Fleetwood has reasons of his own to celebrate. His new drum-loop library, *Total Drumming*, is in some ways the most profound culmination of his hugely influential drumming career. He's the recent father of two twin girls, Ruby and Tessa. And he's about to embark on another adventure, doing what he was born to do: Take new music out on the road, and entertain the fans.

For this month's *Playback*, we asked Mick to start at the beginning….

Peter Green's Fleetwood Mac (1968)

I'd played in several groups around London with people like Peter Bardens and Rod Stewart. One day I got a call from Peter Green, who said that Aynsley Dunbar was no longer going to be part of John Mayall's Blues Breakers, and did I want the gig.

My tenure with Mayall was fairly short-lived, owing to vast amounts of alcohol. He was like a schoolmaster, very strict. He's actually still a dear friend, but the combination of me and John McVie and being twenty years old was deadly. One of us had to go, and John had been with Mayall forever, so off I went.



But Peter called me up and said, Let's do this thing. We'd heard about Jeremy Spencer, a slide guitar player, and we asked John to leave Mayall, but he didn't want to because he was making too much money. We debuted at the 1967 Windsor Jazz Festival without John, in front of 15,000 people. He stood at the side of the stage watching us. And the band was called Fleetwood *Mac* [laughs]. It didn't take long for him to jump ship.

For our first album, our show just needed recording. Our goal was to sound like Elmore James and the other artists we worshipped. A lot of the reason we got into those artists was the sound. So we were very intent on getting as near as we could to that. Basically it was all about mic' placement. Count the band in and play. No overdubbing, no nothin'.

Then Play On (1969)

By this time the art of recording had started to take hold. It became a different animal. Peter was majorly starting to experiment. We were beginning to understand the art of overdubbing and creating a broader musical spectrum. On the first track, "Coming Your Way," you can hear conga overdubs. I've still got those congas. They're actually fiberglass—not very traditional, but in those days I thought they were very flashy. The thing that appealed to me was that they wouldn't get trashed in the back of the van. We didn't have cases in those days.

God knows I do some very simple things, but the one comment that I do enjoy hearing from fellow percussionists is that whatever I do, I do it musically. And that's the greatest compliment I could get, because that's how I feel when I'm playing. Sure there's some technique. But that childlike thing…I know that I really feel things, and that comes at least partly from having played with Peter Green. I know what it's like to have tears rolling down my cheeks, realizing that what this guy is doing is really *moving* me. And that whole element follows through to my playing today: When I do percussion overdubs, it's from a very different perspective sometimes.

Kiln House (1970)

This was the first album without Peter Green. At the time I thought, Well, if this band breaks up, I'll be unhappy, so I better keep this band together. And that became the beginning of a full-time career with me, making sure that Fleetwood Mac, at all costs, keeps going forward.

So I rented this lovely farmhouse, Kiln House, from a friend of mine, who moved out with his wife into a gypsy caravan. We lived in the middle of the English countryside in the summer, a big wild hippie family. And it really worked. It kept the band together. And it led to Christine McVie feeling so sorry for us, she joined the band. [laughs]

Jeremy was great at doing home demos on Revoxes, with multi-tracking harmonies, so we used a lot of those techniques on the album. If you listen to the drums, they're very closed down, very tight. There may be echo on them, but the source sound employed a lot of close miking. I used towels on the drums to keep them very muted, quite Beatle-esque. We had a lot of fun doing things like that.

Mystery To Me (1973)

Bob Welch came to us through a friend of ours, and I invited him to come to the Benifolds house, where we were now all living—continuing the effort to ensure we didn't go off the rails. Bob instantly brought something that we all thought was really cool. He knew all the jazz chords, and he was sort of ethereal and strange and poetic. And even though Bob brought a totally different look and style, fans came with us. We certainly started to do quite well in America. We played a lot of colleges and built up our audience there.

Mystery To Me was probably our strongest album from that period. Recording at home allowed us to have complete freedom, because we didn't have the costs of the studio to hamper us. Because we were renting the Stones' mobile truck, it was much more cost-effective, so it was more fun. We could stop and go down the pub and have a pint and come back home, and…Oh yeah, let's do some playing. There was a lot more creative stuff going on between the bandmembers.

Fleetwood Mac (1975)

Stevie and Lindsey joining the group was sort of a glorious accident. During one of our touring breaks, I went to look at a studio to record the next album. During that brief moment I was there, I heard a tape with Stevie and Lindsey on it. Then Bob Welch left the band, so we went straight into the studio with Keith Olsen, who'd been working with Stevie and Lindsey. Stevie and Lindsey already had a bunch of songs, so there wasn't too much hanging around writing.

Lindsey was used to doing all the production work on their songs, and had been very familiar with *Then Play On*. He also assumed that we could play a certain way. I'd be like, Well, I'll try to do that, but I don't know whether I *can*. [laughs] I'll listen to something that he will have demo'd and go, Oh God, the bass drum is doing all these figures—not a hope in hell will I ever get that right. So I wind up doing something that has some of the elements of what is needed, but expressed in the only way I know how.

Rumours (1977)

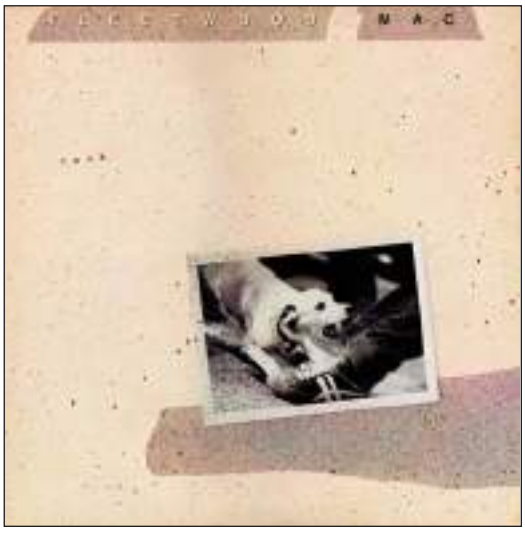
By the time it came to *Rumours*, we spent an incredible amount of time with Ken Caillat and Richard Dashut getting drum sounds. We had made some money, so that was the beginning of the very extended album projects. We took a beating here and there about "the excesses of the '70s," but if you've been blessed with making a lot of money, what better thing to do than to spend it on making the music?

There were so many things I was able to try—some of them complete failures. I remember one lunatic idea: We were having trouble with the bass drum at The Record Plant in Sausalito, and I tried taping three bass drums together. It didn't work, so we just moved some mic's.

Mick Fleetwood

Tusk (1979)

Going into *Tusk* was frightening for Lindsey, because he was worried that there were some weird things he wanted to do

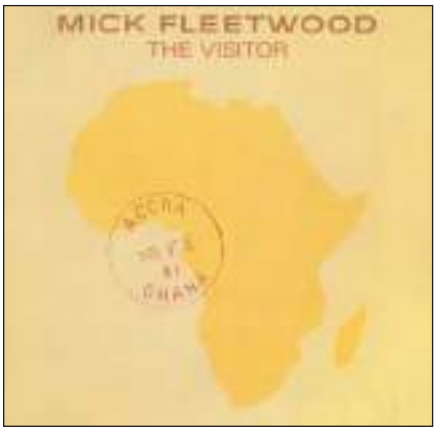


that he wasn't sure he should ask us to do. But *Tusk* turned out to be one of the most important albums this band ever made. *Then Play On* and *Tusk* are my favorite Fleetwood Mac albums. They're cool and adventurous, and I played some really good stuff on them.

As a percussionist, the thought of hitting a Kleenex box in a bathroom and miking it…to me, if something sounds good, go with it. Early on we did some of the same stuff with Jeremy Spencer. You'd hear something that sounds like a big thick cushion hitting someone over the head, and it was a close-miked pencil hitting the side of a chair. So this type of thing wasn't any big deal to me on *Tusk*. And I would draw on my own experiences. I was blessed to be at quite a few of the Beatle sessions, because I was at the time courting the girl who was to be my wife, Jenny Boyd, who's the sister of George Harrison's wife Pattie. I remember being a fly on the wall at a couple of the major sessions, like "Maxwell's Silver Hammer." They literally had an anvil in the studio. I thought that was the greatest thing since sliced bread.

We didn't use this, but I remember one time that slapping the side of my leg wasn't working for this effect we wanted, so we got a leg of lamb from the butcher. On "What Makes You Think You're The One," the drum sound was Lindsey's old Sony ghetto blaster. We opened the mic's up so that it was recording straight onto tape, and that overload and compression is straight off the ghetto blaster. It gave it that "suck and push" sound.

The Visitor (1981)



The Visitor is the highlight of my musical career in terms of my visualizing something and then executing it. I was familiar with and loved a lot of African

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music; I had a great professor at UCLA who was Ghanaian, and he was very helpful before I even got into it. The whole premise was not to emulate or become an expert on African music, but rather to put two completely different elements together and have them both survive, meet halfway.

People joke that I must have African blood in me somewhere, because I so get it, without even knowing what it is. It's about body language. Certainly I've been drawn to a lot of tom-tom work. So it was just a really happy marriage.

Mirage (1982)

Tusk, though definitely a success, was no 17-million-seller like *Rumours*. Management and the record company viewed this as us "going downhill," though of course *we* didn't view it that way. So coming off *Tusk*, there was some conversation about us being a little bit more traditional Fleetwood Mac on *Mirage*, and there's no doubt that even though it did have some hits on it, that album was played a little safe. Not that *Mirage* was a mistake, but we would never go there again in terms of playing it safe.

Tango In The Night (1987)

I thought that album was fantastic, very modern. A lot of the production skills were representative of where Lindsey was at the time. And I did many overdubs, so you got a lot of blend of drums and machines—humanizing something that might have been a little bit uninteresting.

Unfortunately, during the making of that album, we had drifted apart as people. Before we went on tour, Lindsey left the band. We all had our various crosses to bear at that time. But he decided he couldn't see the light at the end of the tunnel. That was when Billy Burnette and Rick Vito came in.

Behind The Mask (1990)

Behind The Mask didn't do incredibly well for us commercially, and that was the beginning of a weird journey where John and I did what we've always done, which is, We must continue. Eventually Stevie left, and we brought Dave Mason and Bekka Bramlett in for *Time*.

But then Christine got disenchanted and

left. And *Time* was not a success. The signs were on the wall: This needs to stop. So we did.

The Dance (1997)

As time went on, my relationship with Lindsey was growing into a really good one. We'd made amends and reconnected. Lindsey was working on a solo album and doing a lot of experimenting, and he asked me to play drums on it. We had a great time, just the two of us working together for the first time in many years.

Pretty soon it was, Who do you think should play bass on this? We tried a bass player and it didn't work out, so John came and did some bass playing, then Chris came in and did a little keyboard thing. Then people saw us working together and said things like, Do you realize it's the twentieth anniversary of *Rumours*? After a while, we got nudged by so many people saying, Why don't you all get back together and celebrate your reunion? Eventually Lindsey just said, Screw it, let's just do it.

So Lindsey dropped the work on his album and we went into rehearsals for what turned out to be the live album *The Dance*, which was the beginning of a major resuscitation of the original bandmembers.

Say You Will (2003)

The whole intent from *The Dance* on was to do a new studio album. Christine had become disenchanted with the travel and had some personal issues, which just meant

Digital Mick

Mick Fleetwood's Total Drumming Loop Library

Long before Mick Fleetwood was approached to put together a drum loop library, he says, "I was one of those drummers who snobbishly looked at this type of thing and said, 'Why would you want to do *that*?' But why not use electronics as a tool? It's just a different method to get some of the same elements.

"Anything that encourages the creative process," insists Mick, "or anything that enhances someone who's already part of that process, is a good thing. With this loop library, students can analyze certain aspects of what's being offered on their palette. There's a spectrum of manipulations. You're free to be totally creative with…with me!"

Producer Jonathan Todd Talks About Total Drumming

How are the loops on *Total Drumming* organized?
They're divided into two sections: wet loops and dry loops. Then each of those two categories is divided into rock, blues, and funk. Those are subdivided into fills, beats, and one-shots.

Can the loops be used on any system?
Yes. We produced everything in pure wav files, so even utside of Acid, these loops are just as viable. And you don't need a computer to use this library. The new porta-studios out there have a loop import function on them.

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How did you decide on what the loops were going to sound like?
We wanted Mick's sounds to be subliminally familiar and acceptable on a platinum-selling level. We'd play him an old track, then turn the headphones off, and just let him go. So there are things in there that are reminiscent of "The Chain" or "Tusk," but they are not those songs.

What instruments did you use?
We actually used many of the drums that Mick originally played on the various recordings. Early on he used Paiste cymbals, later he used Zildjians. We needed to represent that. During the *Rumours* period he used Kevlar "bullet-proof" heads, so we had to find some of those. I had the huge gong from *The Dance* shipped in. We brought in the Taos drumset from New Mexico.

Where did you record?
I looked at all of these studios I had worked in over the years, and hands-down the best studio for this project was Joe and Gino Vanelli's Blue Moon studios in Agora Hills, California. To Mick, the drumset is a piano, and every tone that comes off it is different. This means that the people in the studio need to be highly trained musicians. I need to get sounds that are going to work together, no matter how you tear those loops up.

How did you mike the instruments?
We spent days preparing for this, moving mic's as little as an inch and a half to change the reflective qualities, and testing those sounds against old albums to make sure that they were just like the era we were looking for.

We used a mess of mic's. We used four Sennheiser MD421s on the toms and a Shure SM57 and SM81 on the snare, the 57 on top and the 81 on the bottom. We isolated and combined those as we saw fit. We used a Neumann U47 FET and an AKG D112 on the kick, the 47 at the front, and the 112 at the back. We used Shure SM81s on the hi-hat, top and bottom, and AKG C460s on the rides. Then I put up two ADK A51Ss as stereo overheads, and two Milab VIP50s as ambient room mic's.

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Mick Online

Go to **www.moderndrummer.com** for more exclusive conversation with Mick Fleetwood. Also check out **www.mickfleetwood.com** for all things Mick (and Mac), including videos of the making of *Total Drumming*. At **www.digitraxx.com** and **www.GuitarCenter.com** you'll find further interviews with Mick. You might also want to check out **www.acidplanet.com** for a whole universe of Acid-related information and forums, including a special Mick Fleetwood link.

that we couldn't book more tours. It was sad, but it's led to us doing something quite different.

The new album is produced and primarily engineered by Lindsey. All of the sensibilities of being an adventurer are back. He's been given free rein. The album certainly has elements of *Tusk*. But it is still accessible. We also made a decision not to work with someone who was conversant with Pro Tools, because we wanted to do this album in a very personal way, and that meant literally not having other bodies around.

With all the ups and downs with this band, we sometimes sit and say, What a chemistry we have. And when you fire it up again, Oh my God, it's still there. And there is humor about what we do now, so we're simply not going to do something that ends up being miserable. There are incredibly deep relationships between these people, unlike any other band that I know.

Alan Schechner

Thirty-six-year-old Alan Schechner has had a diverse musical education, and consequently has pursued a diverse professional career. He studied music from junior high school through college, as well as taking lessons in technique, reading, soloing, and multiple musical styles from San Francisco Bay Area teaching legend Chuck Brown. This prepared him for drumming work with dozens of pop, rock, Top-40, and R&B bands in the Bay Area (including a stint with Mr. Big vocalist Eric Martin). It also helped him qualify as a regional winner in the Guitar Center Drum-Off, competing in the finals at the House Of Blues in Los Angeles, where he "opened" for Terry Bozzio, Dennis Chambers, and Simon Phillips.

Alan has also played musical theater, doing "almost every show from *Annie* to *West Side Story*." Currently he performs with The Rhythm Slaves, a rock-based trio that incorporates funk, dance, New Orleans, reggae, and fusion. He also plays with a seventeen-piece big band, just for a change of pace.

A dedicated educator as well as a performer, Alan teaches privately and has written three drum books: *Lickin' Your Chops*, *Transformations*, and *The Art Of Transcribing*. He's currently working on follow-up volumes to the latter two titles. He performs on a Tama Starclassic or Premier Genista kit, with Zildjian, Sabian, and Wuhan cymbals and LP, Remo, and Rhythm Tech percussion. As far as goals, Alan wants to "keep improving as a player, teacher, and author, and to continue to make a living doing what I love."

Howard Alper

Brooklyn drummer Howard Alper has spent the past seventeen years as a sideman and solo artist. He's played with many NYC-based bands and artists, including Living Colour frontman Corey Glover. (Howard co-wrote and played drums on several tracks from Glover's LaFace Records solo release, *Hymns*.) Currently, Howard co-leads The Radical Thought Resistance, whose self-produced CD, *Empowered Species*, was released last year. (It's available at www.radthought.com.) Along with writing lyrics and co-composing the "hard rock meets electronica" material, Howard laid down some dynamic drumming tracks. His playing demonstrates facility, speed, and creative energy.

Besides RTR, Howard also performs regularly with Fun Machine (electronica), solo artist Christine Lucas (pop), and The Mark Pointe Six. He's also worked in musical theater, playing drums on writer Janice Lowe's productions of *Alice Underground*, *This Esther*, and *Lil Budda*.

Stewart Copeland, JoJo Mayer, Vinnie Colaiuta, and Dennis Chambers head Howard's list of drumming influences. He plays Pearl drums and Zildjian cymbals, and his goal is "to continue writing, playing, and recording music for myself and anyone who wishes to listen."

Billy Angelo Stella

Having drumming experience spanning forty-three years might make Billy Angelo Stella sound ancient—if it weren't for the fact that that experience began before Billy was a year old. The forty-four-year-old drummer picked up sticks as an infant, much to the surprise and pleasure of his father, Angelo Stella—himself a well-respected drummer and teacher in the Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania area. Billy was studying with his father by the age of eighteen months, and was "playing out" shortly thereafter. At the age of twelve he sat in with the Buddy Rich band, earning praise from the master himself for his playing on "Mercy Mercy."

Since then, Billy has played with dozens of regional and national acts in all conceivable styles. Taking a cue from the teachings of his father, Billy exhibits the kind of "old-school" versatility that allows him to shift comfortably between pop, rock, Latin, society, country, or even polka gigs. (His demo video displayed his talents in all those styles—along with a *serious* left hand.) In addition to his frequent performances, Billy now shares his skills with students at his teaching studio, The Drummer's Workshop. He also has authored and produced a technique book called *The Drummercise Workout*.

If you'd like to appear in *On The Move*, send us an audio or video cassette of your best work (preferably both solo and with a band) on three or four songs, along with a brief bio sketch and a high-quality color or black & white close-up photo. (Polaroids are not acceptable. Photos will not be paid for or credited.) The bio sketch should include your full name and age, along with your playing style(s), influences, current playing situation (band, recording project, freelance artist, etc.), how often and where you are playing, and what your goals are (recording artist, session player, local career player, etc.). Include any special items of interest pertaining to what you do and how you do it, and a list of the equipment you use regularly. Send your material to On The Move, Modern Drummer Publications, 12 Old Bridge Road, Cedar Grove, NJ 07009. Material **cannot** be returned, so please **do not** send original tapes or photos.

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Which manufacturers give the best warranty service, repairs, and replacements? Which have the quickest deliveries or turnaround time for servicing? Which offer the most information *before* the sale, in terms of easy-to-use catalogs, informative flyers, or other consumer-oriented literature?

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Manufacturers devote a great deal of time, effort, and money to their advertising. We'd like to know which manufacturer presented the ad that you found the most intriguing, exciting, and original. Whose ad particularly caught your attention? Whose ad gave you the incentive to go out and examine a product more closely?

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6. Comments Section

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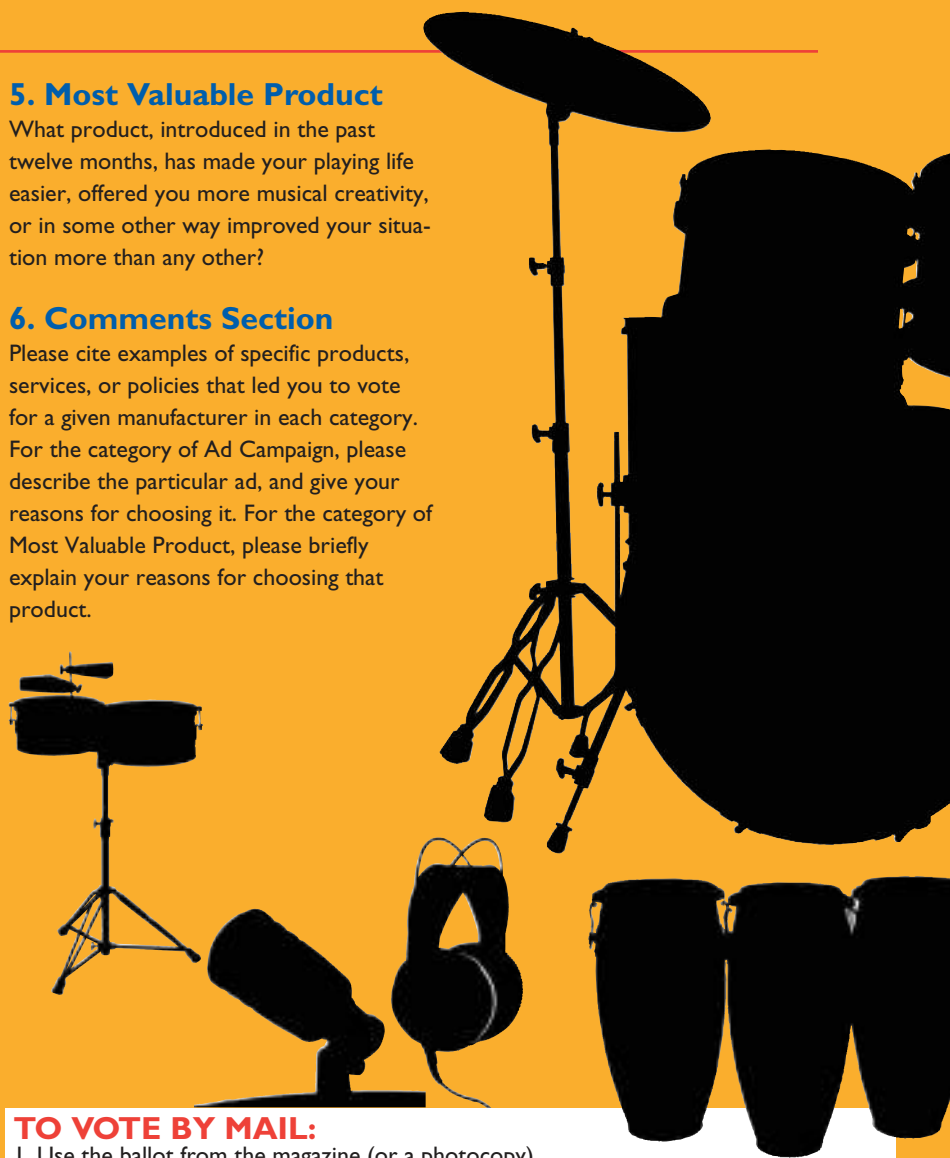

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Magma's CHRISTIAN

Beyond The Bearing Edge

by Morgan Ägren
Translation by Jean François Devanneaux

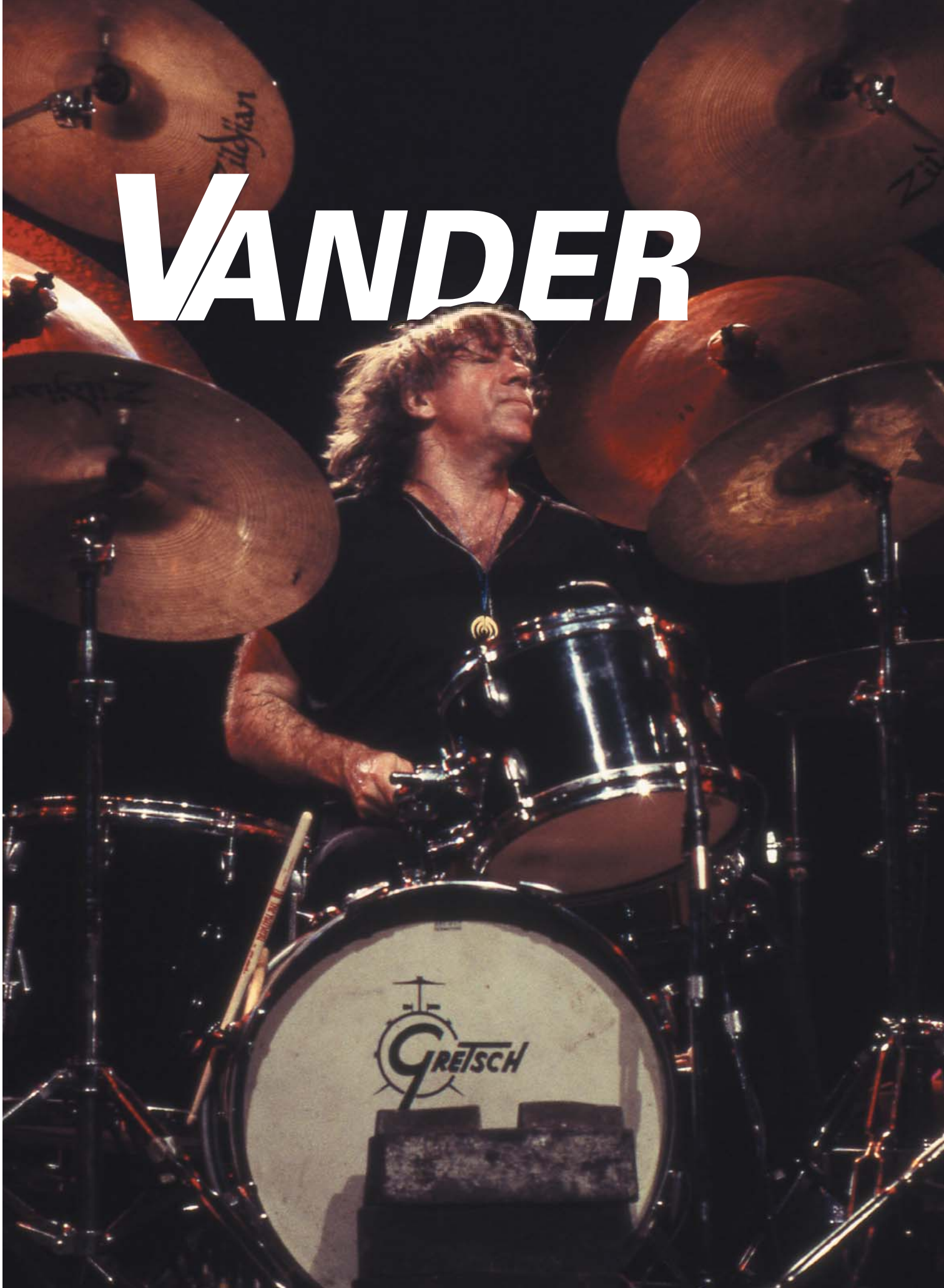
Would you think I was kidding if I claimed that one of the most charismatic musicians I've ever seen is a drummer living in France, who formed his own band more than thirty years ago? You'd probably also think I was kidding if I told you this band sings in their own made-up language called Kobaïan.

Be that as it may, three years ago I went to Paris to see drummer Christian Vander perform with his legendary prog-rock-jazz group Magma. They were celebrating their thirtieth anniversary. I had some tapes of Magma already from my mid-teens, but I'd never gotten the chance to see them live. This time, a French friend called me up about the three Magma concerts that were going to be held in Paris. (I live in Stockholm, Sweden.) It was an event that I could not miss.

Let me say that I am not a journalist. I make my living as a professional drummer. But when I went to Paris to see Magma, I was blown away. I was then lucky enough to meet Christian. After realizing what a special artist he is, I thought, Why not interview him? After seeing him play it would certainly be fun and interesting to sit down with this legend.

It's hard to describe the sound of Christian Vander and Magma. The mood and expression he possesses while playing should be seen. To give you a rough idea, imagine the power of someone like Narada Michael Walden or Terry Bozzio, but played on Elvin Jones' drumkit. It's intense, loud, and sharp. But the jazz sound of Christian's drums makes it very different too, because drummers don't normally play like that on a tiny kit with an 18" bass drum. As for the music of Magma, it sometimes sounds like a cross between Carl Orff's "Carmina Burana" and the Mahavishnu Orchestra.

As I mentioned earlier, Magma sing in their own language, made up by Christian. Listening to their music, you'll hear about the planet Kobaïa, Uniweria Zekt, Zeuhl, and Mekanïk Destruktïw Kommandöh. But you don't have to be interested in this part of the band in order to get a serious kick out of Christian Vander's drumming—and the music of Magma.


VANDER
Zildjian
GRETSCH

MD: How and when did this vision of Kobaïa, the words of Magma, and its musical universe first come to you?

Christian: It's always been a question of circumstances. I've come to discover this different world, or this vision of the world, by a series of events that happened in my life. When I was a child, my mother knew a lot of renowned musicians, like Elvin Jones, Billie Holiday, and Chet Baker. I was in contact with very different types of people, and without knowing what I was going to propose, I've always known I was going to make music.

MD: But what about the language? When you use Kobaïan words, is the musical and rhythmic sound of the words as important as their meaning?

Christian: The words are conceived, or come, at the same time as the composition. So they certainly have a profound meaning. They can also be said with or without the music. But generally they come directly from the music. They're conceived straight away, so they're tied-in in a certain manner.

MD: Did you ever have a second thought or any doubts, thinking you should have written the lyrics in French rather than Kobaïan?

Christian: I didn't have any doubts. Like I've often said, there are a lot of things that could have been written in French or some meanings that were attributed. There was also a sense that I had to understand

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Christian Vander

myself, because I was looking for certain things on a deeper musical level. I had to discover these things naturally over time.

MD: Since I know how hard it is to earn a living out of making music that isn't being played on the radio or TV, I was wondering if you ever had any problems paying the rent. For instance, did you ever have a regular day job?

Christian: Actually, no. In the beginning of Magma, my wife, Stella, who sings with me today, helped out. She had a regular job so we could get by. I did the music knowing that financially it was going to be difficult. But you don't do this for the money. There are always ups and downs in the music business. It's never safe.

When doing this music, you have to make a choice. Sometimes there can be a bit of money, but you can't expect that. It passes. But so many of the truly great musicians I've known didn't have money. So I went on my way and created the music I wanted to make. I had nothing to lose.

MD: Which is your favorite Magma album?

Christian: Often the most recent one, the one that's just been released, because I always try to bring something new to each recording.

MD: But if you *had* to choose an old one….

Christian: Not long ago I listened to the first record again, and I was happy to hear that there are a lot of good things on it.

VANDER At A Glance

- Christian Vander was born on February 21, 1948.
- From an early age his mother introduced him to famous jazzmen such as Elvin Jones and Kenny Clarke. Indeed, Chet Baker gave Vander his first drumkit. He listened to all the greats of jazz, especially John Coltrane, who he had the chance to meet. He also listened to composers such as Wagner, Stravinsky, and Bach, and many R&B and blues bands.
- Vander formed his first group, Les Wurdalaks, in 1966 and wrote his first themes at that time.
- Following the death of John Coltrane in 1967, which had a profound affect on him, Vander left his native France for Italy, where he played in clubs with jazz and R&B groups.
- In 1969 he founded Magma.
- Between 1969 and 1984, about fifty players "trod the boards" with Magma, many of them destined to become musicians of great renown: Didier Lockwood, Jannick Top, Claude Engel, Bernard Paganotti, Yochk'o Seffer, and Teddy Lasry. Magma quickly gained an international reputation, notably following their appearance at the Newport Jazz Festival in 1973, where the band was joined by The Brecker Brothers. More than twenty Magma albums have been released.

• In 1979, Vander formed a parallel, complementary group to Magma, The Alien Quartet, with Benoît Widemann, Patrick Gauthier, Jean-Pierre Fouquey, and Dominique Bertram. This group was followed by The Christian Vander Trio, featuring Michel Graillier and Alby Cullaz. Two Trio albums, *Jour Apres Jour* and *65*! were recorded between 1990 and 1993. The Trio continues to appear regularly in France and throughout Europe.

• Between 1992 and 1995, Vander directed the group Les Voix De Magma, comprised of a dozen musicians and singers. The repertoire, largely inspired by the main Magma themes, put a new perspective on the vocal aspect of his compositions.

• The twenty-fifth anniversary of Magma was celebrated in Paris on October 14 and 15, 1995 with an homage to Vander by a one-hundred-thirty-piece children's orchestra and choir, directed by Gaston Tavel. (This memorable event is available on the album *Babayaga La Sorcière, When Children Sing Magma*.)

• Since 1996, Magma has returned to the stage with a group of talented new musicians playing the mythic work of the '70s to an audience composed mainly of young people.

•

Every record has a story, and the first one has a great story. It was very badly recorded, but there are a lot of things on there that are appealing. I could also say *Mekanïk Destruktïw Kommandöh*. But there are so many records that it's difficult for me to think of all the music and be objective.

MD: Is there anything in music today, or on radio or TV, that you can enjoy listening to?

Christian: Honestly, I don't have that much time to listen. I'm working on my own music. Plus I practice. Besides, I still learn a lot from listening to John Coltrane.

MD: Have you ever wanted to move outside of France to expand your career?

Christian: Sometimes, because it's a difficult country on a musical level. In the French culture, it's more about literature and painting. Music is second to those.

MD: So where did you think of going?

Christian: I knew I wouldn't leave France. I thought, "I am here, and I will do it here." I thought about moving to the United States a long time ago. But why—to play jazz? No, because it's not my music. I come from Europe, and I have to bring something of my own to music. I can't bring anything new to jazz. I love it, but it's not my music.

MD: The way you play, I would think that you would have been asked to come to the US to perform.

Christian: In the beginning, just at the start of Magma, John Hicks, the great pianist who played with Pharoah Sanders, asked me to come to New York to work. I played with him and he said, "You remind me of a friend, Jack DeJohnette. You play like him. You must come to the States and work with me in New York." It was a difficult choice for me, but I said no because I'd just started Magma and couldn't leave it.

MD: Did you ever perform with Magma in the US?

Christian: Yes, many times. And we have some performances coming up.

MD: But did you play in the US in the '70s?

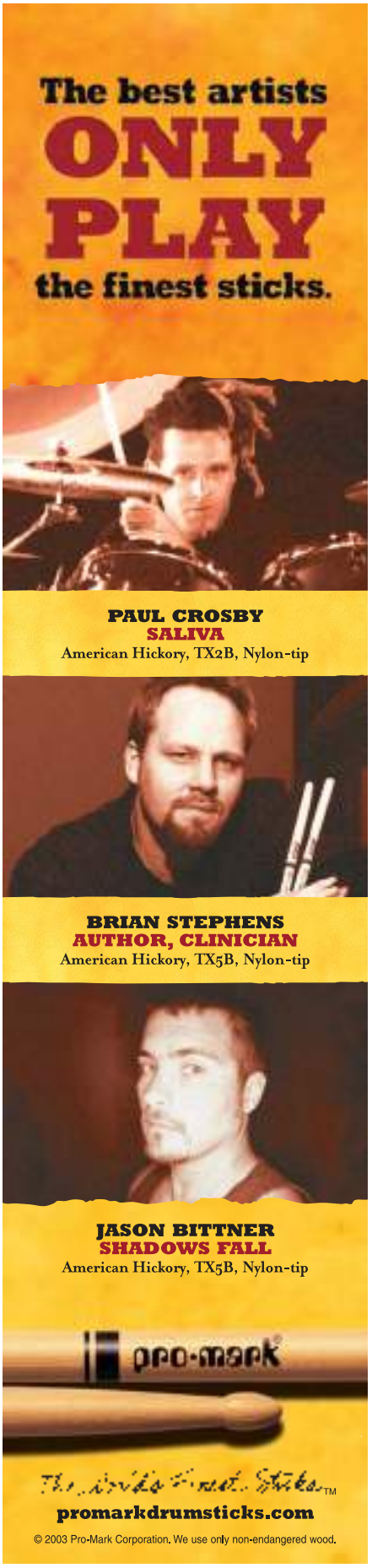
Christian: Yes, in 1973 at the Newport Jazz Festival. We played with The Brecker Brothers, who performed *Mekanïk Destruktïw Kommandöh* with us.

MD: Did you study music in school?

Christian: No, I've mostly trained myself. Actually, at the very beginning I met Elvin Jones, and he gave me some suggestions for things to work on. And Chet Baker taught me certain things. But overall I work all by myself and make progress in my own direction.

MD: Did you start Seventh Records because nobody else wanted to release your stuff, or because you wanted to have complete control over the music?

Christian: In the beginning we were with big companies—A&M, people like that. But then somebody bought Magma from A&M and, like we say, we were put in an impossi-



ble position. It was bought by some Americans who had no contact with us or the music. They weren't releasing the records, and they were not sending royalty income from previous records, so we had big problems. Those people didn't want this music.

We also created Seventh Records to gather together all of our works, all the Magma pieces from the beginning. And we wanted to revise the album art and things like that. We were also hoping that we could bring Magma back together, and it happened.

MD: What's your latest project?

Christian: I've just finished a record that I composed between 1982 and 1997, which is called *Les Cygnes Et Les Corbeaux (The Swans And The Ravens).* This is a one-hour-five-minute-long piece. I composed other things while I was working on this, but this was a big project that took a lot of time. We've just finished recording it.

MD: How do you go about writing your music?

Christian: I wait for the music to come to me. And I'm not influenced by external events, except for a few small things. In any case, I let the music come subconsciously. That's very important. I don't make the music, I let it come.

MD: How do you teach a new composition to your musicians? Do you write the music out?

Christian: I work a lot with tapes, and after that, we rehearse with the band. I propose the parts to the musicians. The parts are written.

MD: For this next series of questions, I'll say something and I'd like you to say the first words that come to mind. Elvin Jones.

Christian: I love him.

MD: Frank Zappa.

Christian: Hmmm, there's a word I always say for Zappa and his music. It's "derision."

MD: Buddy Rich.

Christian: Good single strokes.

MD: Keith Jarrett.

Christian: The sense of vibration.

MD: Billy Cobham or Narada Michael Walden?

Christian: Billy Cobham.

MD: Terry Bozzio or Vinnie Colaiuta?

Christian: Terry Bozzio.

MD: Jack DeJohnette or Tony Williams?

Christian: Complementary, very difficult to choose one over the other.

MD: Drums or cymbals?

Christian: Cymbals.

MD: Speaking of equipment, your bass drum sound is one of your trademarks. You took an 18" bass drum into some very different music. In fact, the bass drum is very much a focus in Magma's music. Do you have any specific ways of tuning the drum?

Christian: I tune my entire drumset depending on the themes I play. With the snare drum, for example, I'll tune it to an F, G, or A flat. Then I'll tune the other drums so they create a chord.

MD: You've always been a Gretsch player. What made you want to play their drums?

Christian: Elvin Jones. To me, Gretsch drums are Elvin's sound! It's the sound you hear inside of John Coltrane's music. To me, Gretsch drums, especially the old ones, are the Stradivarius of this instrument. They're difficult to control, wild, but if you're able to do it, they become mysterious and magical and give you an infinite range of sound.

I play a black Gretsch kit from the early '70s. I usually only use one alto tom—a 12"—but occasionally I'll add a 13". I have three floor toms—14", 16", and 18"—but I don't always use the 18". And as you mentioned, I play an 18" bass drum with a DW pedal. As for cymbals, I use all K Zildjians. I almost always use a 20" ride, but sometimes a 22", and 15" hi-hats, among many other choices. And I use Vic Firth 7A drumsticks.

MD: Did you ever practice out of drum books?

Christian: I've tried a few method books. But the best thing for me was to practice with a group, in the field, "au charbon" (doing one's bit) as we say here. Even so, I've invented ways to do things and develop technique, like a very efficient way to practice single strokes.

MD: What were your practice routines like on the drums when growing up?

Christian: I focused more on developing suppleness rather than sheer technique,

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which was advice Elvin Jones gave me early on. But I didn't have the luck to have a "maestro" behind me to correct my shortcomings. I had to discover or rediscover everything by myself, instinctively.

MD: How often do you practice today?

Christian: I practice when I feel I have difficulties performing something I absolutely must do, or when I don't feel free enough. In short, I still practice regularly. I'm also always thinking about my approach on the drums, which is all about being supple. I try to keep things smooth, without bumps, so that they flow. I also think about "touch." Most importantly, I think about not creating useless noise on the drums.

Swedish drumming great Morgan Ägren formed The Mats/Morgan Band in 1981 with blind keyboard player Mats Öberg. Ägren started his own record company, Ultimate Audio Entertainment, in 1996, on which he has released fifteen titles. Morgan has also produced two videos and a book, and has recorded and/or performed with Frank Zappa, Steve Vai, Fredrik Thordendal (of Meshuggah), Spoonman, Glen Hughes, Tony Iommi, Terry Bozzio, Mike Keneally, and Dweezil Zappa. For more info on Ägren, go to www.morganagren.com.

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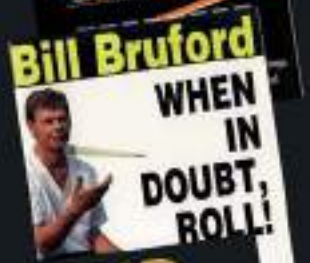

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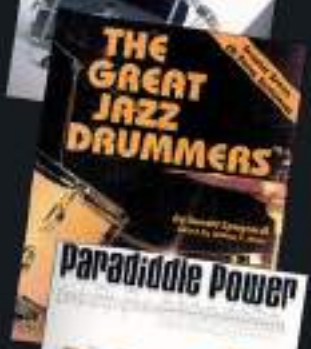

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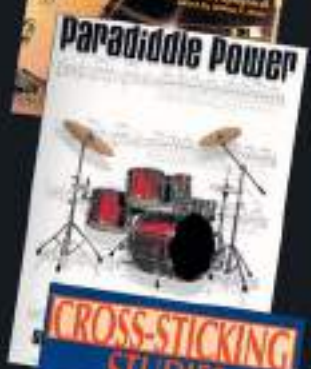

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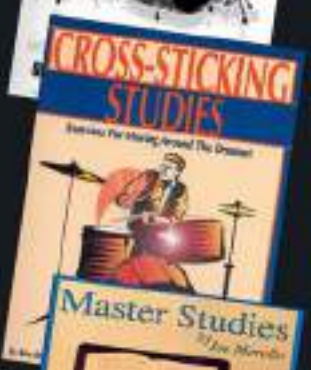

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RECORDINGS

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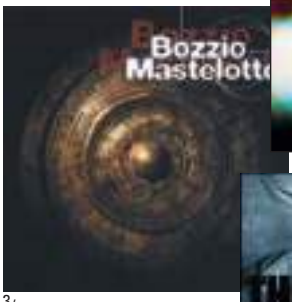
9 Strapping Young Lad SYL (Century Media)

Devin Townsend is a mad scientist of heavy, progressive music. And while the singer and guitarist has collaborated with Steve Vai and operated under the Physicist and Ocean Machine monikers, Strapping Young Lad is his main monster. On the Vancouver quartet's latest, insanely complex arrangements are stitched to riff-packed melodies and keyboard atmospherics. Yep, **GENE HOGLAN** has his work cut out for him, yet his drumming is always a crucial aspect of these extreme-metal blasts, which rail against war, rape, and other badness. Hoglan's blinding tempos and schizoid signatures intensify the power and minutiae of "Consequence" and "Relentless." And the elaborate "Aftermath" is a virtual course in extreme drumming, as Townsend's Dio-like croon (he also croaks in maniacal death-metal mode) meshes tightly with Townsend and **Jed Simon**'s guitar work. These lads can play. **Jeff Perlah**

8 Bozzio/Mastelotto (independent)



TERRY BOZZIO and **PAT MASTELOTTO**, two earthquake-shaken Los Angeles transplants both now residing in Austin, Texas, join creative forces for an acoustic instrumental collection of percussive soundscapes that reveal their combined genius and love for improvised music. These totally improvised, organic percussive compositions range from world ambient to total avant-garde, using such abstract sources as bowed & super ball–rubbed gongs to electric hand-drill mallets. Bozzio even adds a 3/4-scale violin on "Jack Benny." These veterans of sonic explorations have created an acoustically mysterious and spiritually enchanting soundtrack. (www.terrybozzio.com) **Mike Haid**

7 Marco Benevento And Joe Russo (independent)

As duos go, this ain't no Hall & Oates. On their debut LP, organist **Marco Benevento** and drummer **JOE RUSSO** churn out edgy instrumentals with an admirable disregard for genre boundaries. Jazz, rock, funk, fusion, drum 'n' bass—whatever, as long as it cooks. The small-group setting allows the players to turn on a dime, and Russo fittingly creates a fluid, stream-of-consciousness pulse that's open to inspiration. His telepathic interaction with Benevento makes spontaneous moments seem planned; the two hard-driving improv numbers are among the studio/live album's finest. The composed bits mostly serve as launching pads for freewheeling exploration. (www.organanddrums.com) **Michael Parillo**

7 The Jim Cifelli New York Nonet

Tunnel Vision (Short Notice Music)

Contrary to the title, trumpeter **Jim Cifelli** clearly sees the big picture with engaging arrangements stressing a sumptuous ensemble sound. The jazz nonet's third and best CD swings more effortlessly than ever. Strong soloing here from **Joel Frahm**'s muscular tenor, bad boy guitarist **Pete McCann**, and the incisive melodicism of Cifelli's warm horn. Longtime on many "deserving wider recognition" lists, drummer **TIM HORNER** keeps the band on popping edge with his commanding, infectious cymbal ride. He smartly exploits the virtues of a "little big band" format, delivering drive while avoiding clutter. Good taste and focus from the whole nine. (www.cdbaby.com) **Jeff Potter**

8 The Haunted

One Kill Wonder (Earache)

When Swedish band At The Gates called it quits in the mid-'90s, a few of its members formed The Haunted. Whereas ATG relied on sprawling death-metal, The Haunted churns out tight, vicious, Slayer-inspired thrash/hardcore. Perhaps too many Swedes have adopted this approach in recent years, yet few do it as expertly as The Haunted. And the band's third album packs quite a wallop, as the precise, dual-guitar mayhem and roaring vocals of "Godpuppet" and "Everlasting" demonstrate. Yet the record also shows a grittier, looser, and ultimately more creative feel than previous outings, allowing drummer **PER MOELLER-JENSEN** to really stretch out. His booming rhythm and cool intricacies benefit an eerie classic-metal arrangement on the instrumental "Demon Eyes," and he truly manhandles his kit on the tumultuous "Urban Predator," the Pantera-like "Bloodletting," and the hardcore rant "Shithead." Yikes! **Jeff Perlah**

SIGNIFICANT REISSUES

Yes

Given a choice of pre–King Crimson performances by **BILL BRUFORD**, many would choose his dynamo-infused intricacy on Yes's "Heart Of The Sunrise." Thirty years on, Bruford's contribution here remains a remarkable drumming moment, an example of his particular kind of genius. Bruford's unique sticking and extremely musical and animated ideas make the track come to life. Closely following the keyboards and bass with exact 16th notes in verses, then executing simple yet profound fills elsewhere, Bruford establishes the textbook for prog-rock drumming. Many have imitated, few have followed, and even fewer have come close.

The reissues of Yes's first four albums—the self-titled debut, *Time And A Word*, *The Yes Album*, and *Fragile*—have multiple Bruford glory moments: the boinging snare drum of "Roundabout," the maniacally complex sticking of "Five Percent For Nothing," the whizzing rolls and cymbal clang of "Astral Traveler," the staccato fire of "Yours Is No Disgrace." Later, Bruford focused and refined his style with Crimson and on his solo records. But his seminal work with Yes remains a spectacular achievement in drumming history. (Rhino/Atlantic) **Ken Micallef**

WHAT IN THE WORLD

Cuban Jazz is the latest CD from piano virtuoso **Alfredo Rodriguez**, who has assembled an all-star cast of musicians. **J. L. "CHANGUITO" QUINTANA** on timbales, **R. "MAMEY" EVANGELISTI** on bongos, and master tumbador **TATA GUINES** propel the ensemble known as "Los Acereko." "Blues Guaguanco" and "Pagozan" peaks out with the percussionists furiously soloing. (NaxosWorld)

Master percussionist **STEVEN V. KROON** has a great new CD out, *Señor Kroon*, which features a strong, driving ensemble of jazz and Latin players. **LEWIS NASH** and **VINCE CHERICO** play traps, and **Don Salvador** and **Oscar Hernandez** play piano. Special guests **Ron Carter** on bass and **Steve Nelson** on vibes add icing to the cake on this session. (www.stevekroan.com)

Lebanese percussionist **YOUSIF SHERONIK** (whose last name means cocoon of the silk worm) has created an amazing palette for virtuosity on his latest CD, *Silk Thread*. Lots of guests, including **GLEN VELEZ**, **Foday Musa Suso**, and **Pandit Samir Chatterjee** are featured. But Sheronik's "Manta Ray Dance," a solo on the riq (Egyptian tambourine) stands out as testimony to his genius. (www.yousifsheronk.com)

The powerful new CD from composer **Mark-Anthony Turnage** features the BBC Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Leonard Slatkin. A set of four premier recordings, the highlight is the double percussion concerto on a piece by **PETER ERSKINE** called "Fractured Lives." The tune serves as a vehicle for Mr. Erskine, who improvises over **EVELYN GLENNIE** playing a composed cadenza. The result is both soothing and bombastic—and a bit eerie. (Chandas) **David Licht**

9 Roy Haynes Love Letters (Eighty-Eights/Columbia)

Is there anything **ROY HAYNES** can't do? This mighty seventy-seven-year-old continues to unleash stunning drumming in equally compelling jazz formats. *Love Letters* follows 2001's *Birds Of A Feather* as further example of the Haynesian art. His drumming still swings with fiery snap, crackle, and pop, and his dates as a leader have only improved with age. *Love Letters* features contributions from **John Scofield**, **Dave Holland**, and **Josh Redman**, in an urbane, all-standards outing. Recorded with new digital technology, this is the best-sounding record of Haynes' career, allowing you to hear his brush mastery, pointillistic drumming, and shimmering cymbal touch in all their glory. Essential. **Ken Micallef**

6 The Exies Inertia (Virgin)

LA-based alt-rock vets The Exies launch a respectable major-label debut with *Inertia*. And drummer **DENNIS WOLFE** contributes his own noteworthy share via an urgent drive on tracks like "Can't Relate," which features minimal hype, yet still layers a rather convincing groove. But Wolfe is actually more engaging during down-tempo numbers like "Kickout," where his liberal use of dynamics comes in handy. Fun cuts like "Lo Fi" add an element of playfulness with Wolfe's bouncy, comfortable, and seamless patterns. If only every major label debut was this solid.

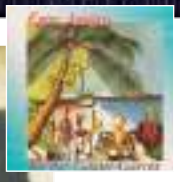
7 Mark Kelso Lost Kingdoms (independent)

You may know Torontonian **MARK KELSO** as Holly Cole's drummer. What you probably don't know is that he's a respected session player, a composer, and a producer—all attributes showcased in *Lost Kingdoms*. An ambitious work, it spans many musics of the world, leaning heavily on Latin. A solid drummer who leaves no loose ends, Kelso is also a credible singer who would have been at home in several of Pat Metheny's line-ups. (Check out the rhythmic *a cappella* "Enuma Elish.") Kelso delivers the goods: an audiophile-quality recording with lush ensemble parts and pristine drum/percussion sounds. (www.groovydrums.com) **T. Bruce Wittet**

7 Johnny Marr And The Healers Boomslang (iMUSIC)

Although it's been years since **Johnny Marr** has been in the spotlight, the prolific and highly acclaimed guitarist hasn't been resting on his laurels since his seminal act The Smiths disbanded over fifteen years ago. Marr's solo debut features drummer **ZAK STARKEY** (yep, Ringo's son). The self-produced full-length finds Starkey sitting comfortably in a walking groove through variations of spatial, sensory rock. It's all very fluid, earnest, well-coordinated, and worth that night-time relaxing listen. **Waleed Rashidi**

7 Richie Gajate-Garcia Entre Amigos (Pulpo Records)



Nicknamed "El Pulpo" (The Octopus) for his independent, seemingly multiple limbs, MVP percussionist **RICHIE GAJATE-GARCIA** has backed artists as diverse as Sting, Celia Cruz, and Brooks & Dunn. As the title suggests, this self-produced disc is a sunny affair. It's a good-time mix of salsa styles with a peppering of jazz and pop. And the playful "Lisette Maria" offers a refreshing mix of Latin groove with a reggae lift. Gajate's compositions favor large ensembles with stabbing brass, driven by flawless, energized multi-percussion. "El Pulpo" doesn't need to indulge in soloing to shine; his long arms embrace and guide his friends throughout. (www.gajate.com) **Jeff Potter**

6 Gordian Knot Emergent (Sensory)

The sons of King Crimson keep coming, this toddler including **BILL BRUFORD** and Genesis guitarist **Steve Hackett**. With three guitarists and bass whiz **Sean Malone**, Gordian Knot recalls progera Genesis and the textures if not the muscle of classic Crimson. There are no circuitous rhythms or sublime melodic messages here, though (excepting "The Brook The Ocean"), just an oozing, ominous soundfield. The songs often feel static, even with Bruford onboard. (Drummer **SEAN REINERT** plays on three tracks.) Bruford does propel meaty meter into the molten music, adding both spaciousness and excitement. He makes GK boil with percussive ardor, even if their songs are repetitive and lacking in the majestic lyricism of prime King Crimson. **Ken Micallef**

8 F.O.N. Adventures In Boredom (Doc Hollywood)

It's easy to get caught up in soundalike pop-punk, yet F.O.N.'s No Use For A Name–meets–Incubus blend gives the act an edge in the originality column. Keeping the septet in check is the Tony Royster Jr. of punk rock, fourteen-year-old **ILAN RUBIN**, who lays his tracks with more precision and maturity than most drummers twice his age. Every backbeat is solid, every fill lands comfortably. But what's even more impressive is Rubin's use of restraint—his tricks are on standby and are activated only when needed. Will someone please verify his birth certificate? **Waleed Rashidi**

BOOKS

9 The Techno Primer: The Essential Reference For Loop-Based Music Styles
by Tony Verderosa (Hal Leonard)

level: all, $19.95

As VFX, Tony Verderosa created an innovative style playing a signature kit of electronic drums, sampler, and computer. In this much-needed tutorial, Verderosa handily explains the man-machine interface of DJ/live music with great insight and expertise. *The Techno Primer* details electronic music history from Russolo to Moby to Arp; explains such software programs as Recycle, Reason, and Reaktor while outlining computer-based home studio functions; includes artist/DJ interviews and an enhanced CD with sound files; and generally reveals the ghost in the machine behind the electronic musician army. Highly recommended. **Ken Micallef**

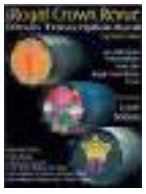
6 Keith Moon: A Personal Portrait
by Peter "Dougal" Butler (Full Moon Books)

level: all, $125

With its puzzlingly steep cover price, this limited-edition picture book is for diehard fans only. Real Moonies, already well versed in Who lore, will forgive the volume's lack of musical information and savor the many unearthed photos of Moon The Loon. Author and primary photographer Butler worked for years as Moon's assistant (or "minder," as he puts it), and captured Keith pummeling his kit, lounging with his family, drinking with buddies—even impersonating Adolph Hitler. Butler also reprints selected letters, receipts, and requests for money. But he isn't much of a writer, and his artless reiteration of Moon's loneliness, debauchery, and womanizing quickly becomes numbing. There's occasional insight, like that Keith had a weak connection with Roger Daltrey because the singer wasn't much of a partier. The biggest revelation, however, comes as bad news: Moon never practiced and didn't even keep a drumset around when the Who was idle. Don't expect to learn anything about Keith's music from this book. Just flip the pages and watch him come undone. **Michael Parillo**

8 Royal Crown Revue: Drum Transcription Book by Daniel Glass (Bam-Bam's)

level: intermedi-

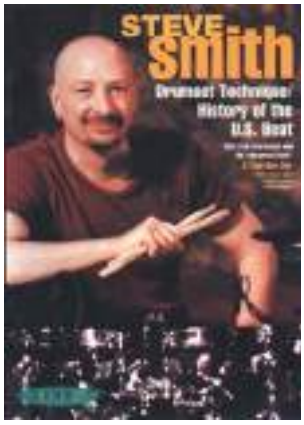


Daniel Glass's *Royal Crown Revue: Drum Transcription Book* swings hard! Twenty-four RCR tunes are transcribed within these 56 soft-bound pages, and every song is a serious lesson in five classic American styles of music: traditional/classic jazz, swing, bebop, jump/R&B, and Latin jazz. Glass starts out with a quick history in these five styles and recommends specific drummers and songs to listen to. The following transcriptions contain "stories behind the songs," tempo markings, and style classifications. These are not just transcriptions, they're detailed lessons on what Glass played and how he played it. Each tune is dissected and broken down into grooves, fills, and much more. Drummers will not simply be playing along with the tunes; they'll be learning how to make music. (www.danielglass.com) **Fran Azzarto**

DVDS

9 Steve Smith Drum Set Technique/History Of The U.S. Beat
(Hudson Music)

level: intermediate to advanced, $49.95

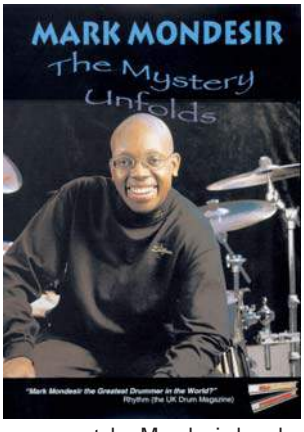


Within this two-disc DVD set, Smith shows he is not only a top drummer but a master technician, instructor, and drumming historian. The vast amounts of drumming techniques and concepts on disc one alone are enough to keep even the most studious of drummers occupied for years. In-depth hand and feet techniques, practice concepts, licks and phrases, independence/interdependence, implied metric modulation, and four extended solos fill disc one with two and a half hours of advanced drumming education. Smith's optional commentary, as he performs examples and solos, gives greater insight into his drumming influences and techniques. Smith convincingly explains and demonstrates why jazz drumming is the "foundational style" that all other US drumming styles come from, with the swing pulse being the "rhythmic common denominator."

On disc two, Smith explains and performs, with various combos of players, the history of US drumming and how the drumset and drumming styles evolved. Examples include early New Orleans jazz, big band, bebop, R&B, country, blues, Gospel, rock, funk, and jazz/rock. Smith takes the opportunity to demonstrate how many of these styles are combined into his own brand of fusion, as his group Vital Information performs seven of their own tunes to close out the disc. The price for this set may seem a bit steep. But for drumming educators, music historians, and players interested in achieving the highest levels of advanced drumming techniques, it's *well* worth the investment. **Mike Haid**

8 Mark Mondesir The Mystery Unfolds (RSJ Groove)

level: all, $42.67 (plus $3.00 postage)



Mark Mondesir (Jeff Beck, John McLaughlin, John Scofield, Wynton and Branford Marsalis) possesses a rare combination of Cobham-like dynamics and polyrhythmic vision—witness his three-way independence trick. But Mondesir's mission here is to simplify some of the "mysteries" of drumming. He breaks down the traditional 26 rudiments to a mere 7 (less confusing), and discusses ambidexterity in terms of freedom and power. He comments on the difference between jazz playing and groove playing, and the importance of playing fills in the same "language" as the groove style. Mondesir breaks down the rigidity of drumming and its rules, and helps players develop what he calls "a handful of codes." Good stuff. (In the States: www.rsjgroove.co.uk; in Europe: www.hudsonmusic.com) **Robin Tolleson**

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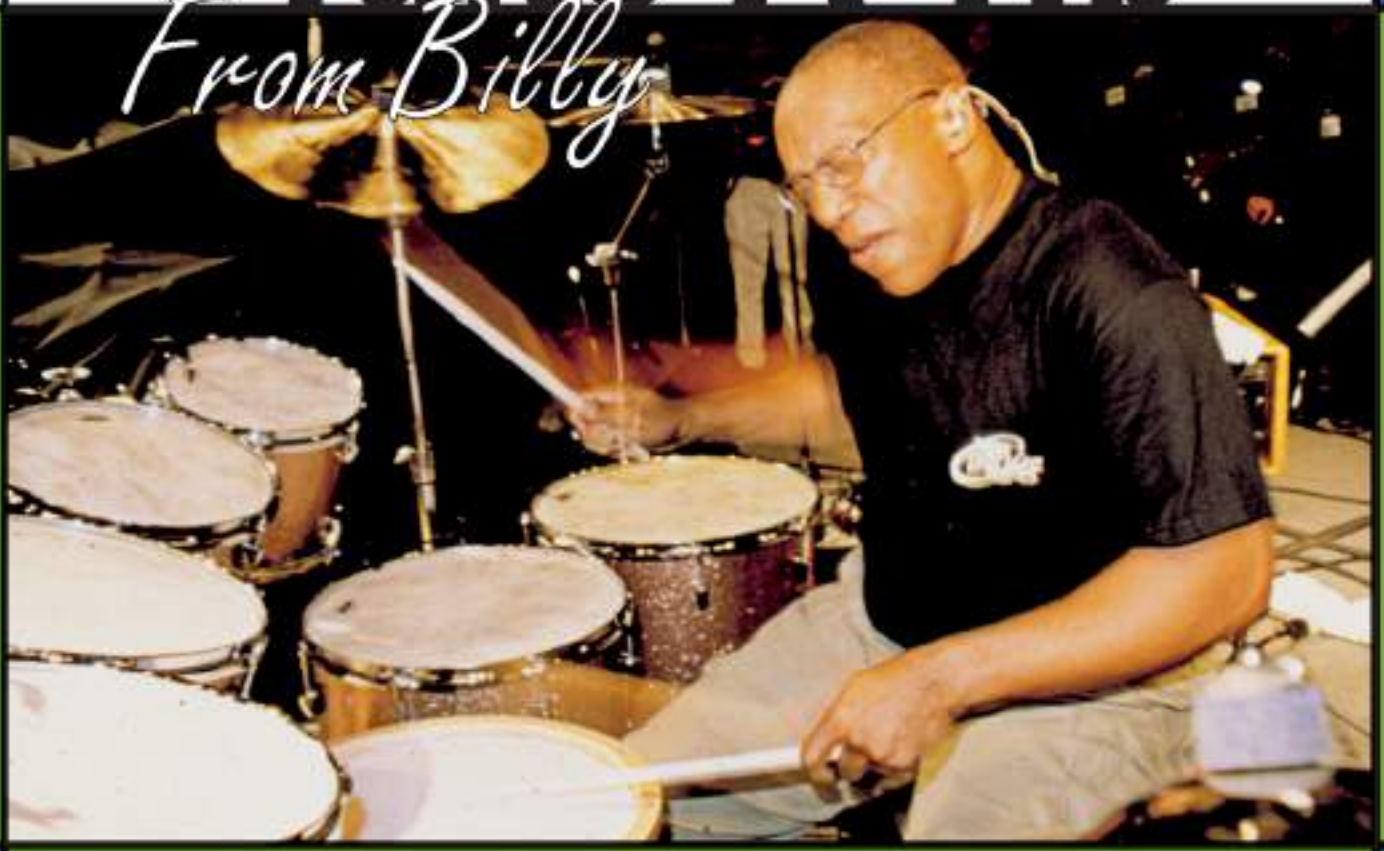
From Billy



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Sabian's Drums Along NAMM

Sabian's Drums Along NAMM event is eagerly anticipated by drum-oriented attendees at the annual music-industry trade show (held each January). But the buzz this year was particularly high after the announcement of Tower Of Power as the opening act. The crowd was "feeling the funk" as the band ripped through its trademark ultra-tight arrangements, driven by the legendary rhythm team of drummer **David Garibaldi** and bassist Francis "Rocco" Prestia (on his first gig since receiving a liver transplant). By the end of the set, everybody knew exactly "What Is Hip?"

David Garibaldi with Tower Of Power

Solid rock came next, with a guitar-based band fronted by bassist/vocalist Glen Hughes (known for his stint with Deep Purple) and anchored by drummer **Robin DiMaggio**. No slouch when it comes to slamming, Robin nonetheless was pleased to bring in a special guest: Chili Peppers power-house **Chad Smith**. Together, the two drummers laid down backbeats that had the walls

Robin DiMaggio

Next up was **Zoro** & The LA All-Stars, featuring **Richie "Gajate" Garcia** on percussion and former members of Earth Wind & Fire. The grooves were deep and wide as the band ripped through a series of EWF hits that had the crowd dancing and singing along.

Richie "Gajate" Garcia

Carmine Appice and his Vanilla Fudge bandmates closed the show. Their dynamic performance reiterated the fact that they literally created the power-rock genre—and can still kick it with the best of 'em.

Additional support for the show was provided by Audix, Kaman, Remo, Tama, Vater, and Yamaha.

Yamaha Groove Night

For the fourth straight year, Yamaha celebrated their drums, their artists, their staff, and the birthday of their drum guru, Takashi "Hagi" Hagiwara by presenting their Annual Legendary Groove Night. Held on Saturday, January 18 at the Galaxy Theater in Santa Ana, this year's show was notable for the inclusion of several international artists.

The musical festivities were anchored by crack LA R&B band The Bristols (augmented by Will Lee on bass and vocals, **Ralph MacDonald** on percussion, and a blazing horn section) and emceed by **Rick Marotta**. Each drummer on the bill played one number with the band, focusing not on chops, but on feel and musicality. A special highlight of the evening was Michael McDonald's guest appearance on vocals. The capacity crowd could barely stay seated as the grooves washed over them.

The show ended on a high note, as drummer after drummer took turns on the three on-stage kits for a rousing rendition of The Meters' "Hey Pocky Way." A good time was had by all.

Also appearing on the show were **Marcus Baylor, J.D. Blair, Tom Brechtlein, David Garibaldi, "JR" Robinson,** and **Dave Weckl**. Additional support for Groove Night was provided by Latin Percussion, Paiste, Regal Tip, Remo, Sabian, Shure, and Zildjian.

Charley Drayton (left) and Ralph MacDonald
Lissa Wales

Vince Wilburn Jr.
Heinz Kronberger

Christian Meyer (Italy)
Heinz Kronberger

Ahmir "?uestlove" Thompson
Heinz Kronberger

Erik Smith (Norway)
Heinz Kronberger

Lissa Wales
Gerry Brown

Wolfgang Haffner (Germany)
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International Fastest Drummer Contest

This year's NAMM trade show featured the NAMM International Fastest Drummer Contest.

Contestants were scored on playing single strokes for sixty seconds, as recorded by a Drumometer.

Battle Of The Hands winner Kai Katchadourian, (center) and Battle Of The Feet winner Reno Kiillerich.

Besides competitions to determine which drummers have the fastest hands and feet, the event included technical demonstrations and appearances by WFD Champions **Mike Mangini**, **Art Verdi**, **Johnny Rabb**, **Tim Waterson**, and **Jotan Afanador**.

The Fastest Feet award went to **Reno Kiillerich** of Denmark, who played a blistering 802 single strokes in sixty seconds. **Kai Katchadourian** of Hawaii won the Fastest Hands category with an astounding 907 single strokes in 60 seconds. Prizes were provided by Mapex, Pro-Mark, Meinl, Axis pedals, Remo, and laser engraver Tim Byrd. The contest finals will air on Fox Sports Net's XSTV next season. For more information visit www.ExtremeSportDrumming.com.

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Indy Quickies

This past January 16 the **Hard Rock Cafe** chain celebrated the opening of the **Hard Rock Vault**. Several notable drummers donated instruments at the opening, including **Vinnie Paul** of Pantera and **Simon Kirke** of Bad Company.

Vinnie Paul

Simon Kirke

The 17,000-square-foot attraction in Orlando, Florida offers fans a glimpse at the evolution of rock 'n' roll music through interactive displays, guided tours, and priceless memorabilia from music legends like Elvis Presley, The Beatles, The Rolling Stones, and The Grateful Dead, along with top contemporary acts. For more information, log on to www.hardrock.com or call (407) 599-7625.

Shure's Musical Roots benefit concert, held Friday, January 17 at the House of Blues in Anaheim, presented Cheap Trick (with drummer **Bun E. Carlos**) as the headlining act. The concert raised $50,000 to aid hearing conservation charities. It was also a pay-off event for the company's grassroots-based original-song Musical Roots contest. A $5,000 voucher for Shure gear went to contest winner Zachary Mechlem.

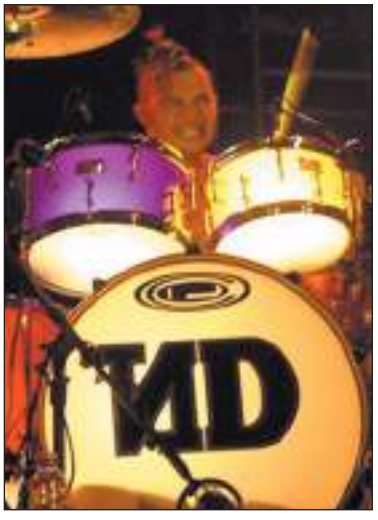
Bun E. Carlos of Cheap Trick

Marilee Pothoff (left), marketing director for the House Ear Institute, accepts a check for $50,000 from Shure's Mark Brunner on behalf of the House Ear Institute, H.E.A.R., and the Hearing Aid Music Foundation charities.

You're okay, but the drums are out!!

Quick Beats

Adrian Young (No Doubt)



What are some of your favorite grooves?
In no particular order, Phil Rudd on "Back In Black" (AC/DC), Stevie Wonder on "Superstition" (Stevie Wonder), Larry Mullen Jr. on "Sunday Bloody Sunday" (U2), John Dolmayan on "Chop Suey" (System Of A Down), Chad Sexton on "Homebrew" (311), Chad Smith on "Give It Away" (Red Hot Chili Peppers), Eric Kretz on "Vasoline" (Stone Temple Pilots), Mel Gaynor on "Don't You Forget About Me" (Simple Minds), Matt Cameron on "Black Hole Sun" (Soundgarden), Stewart Copeland on "Demolition Man" (The Police), Tim Alexander on "My Name Is Mud" (Primus), John Bonham on "The Song Remains The Same" (Led Zeppelin), John Stanier on "Give It" (Helmet), Fish on "Bonin' In The Boneyard" (Fishbone), Les Warner on "Wildflower" (The Cult), Josh Freese on "Can't Change Me" (Chris Cornell), Charlie Drayton on "Channel Z" (The B-52's), Matt Johnson on "Lover, You Should Have Come Over" (Jeff Buckley), Bernard Purdie on "Home At Last" (Steely Dan), and Carlton Barrett on "Guiltiness" (Bob Marley And The Wailers).

What's your favorite TV theme music?
One of the great theme songs of all time is from *Barney Miller*.

If you could put an imaginary super band together, who would be in it?
Eminem, Moby, and me.

Mongo Santamaria

Afro-Cuban Musical Giant

Percussionist and composer Ramón Santamaria—known to the music world as "Mongo" Santamaria—died February 1 in Miami's Baptist Hospital of complications from a stroke. He was eighty-five.

Hailed as one of the pioneers of Afro-Cuban music, Santamaria literally changed the course of popular music over a six-decade-long career. Mongo was born in Havana, and dedicated his life to music at an early age. The 1940s found him in Mexico, where he joined Pérez Prado's orchestra. Touring with Prado brought Mongo into the US, where he instantly made an impression on the musical scene.

In 1951 Mongo joined mambo king Tito Puente's big band. Later, he brought percussionist Willie Bobo into the fold, adding yet more fire to an already intense rhythmic team. Mongo and Willie later moved to the West Coast, where they broke more musical ground with vibist Cal Tjader's seminal Latin jazz combo.

Among his many contributions, Mongo created the melody for "Afro Blue," a jazz tune made famous by John Coltrane and later covered by McCoy Tyner, Dizzy Gillespie, and Count Basie. He also was the first percussionist to bring Afro-Cuban folkloric instruments like bata drums and shekeres to jazz performance.

In the early 1960s, big bands were fading and rock 'n' roll was on the rise. Mongo managed to bridge the gap by adding a three-horn line to a piano/bass/drums/conga rhythm section. The result was a grooving septet that played music with a primal appeal. This septet was responsible for Mongo's 1963 smash, "Watermelon Man" (written by then-bandmate Herbie Hancock). Mongo's innate sense of propulsive rhythm transcended his own recordings, influencing *all* styles of popular music—to the point where congas became a staple in pop and rock music.

Like most successful bandleaders, Mongo had a keen eye for young talent. It was with his septet that future keyboard giant Chick Corea and jazz flutist Hubert Laws made their first recordings.

As a conguero, Mongo was a virtuoso without peer. According to European percussion master Martin Verdonk, "Mongo Santamaria will always be remembered. There is not one conga player out there who has not been influenced by his unique sound." LA studio percussion star Luis Conte adds, "Mongo will always be 'el tambor mayor' in my heart. God bless you, Mongo." Latin bandleader/conguero Poncho Sanchez says simply, "Without Mongo, there's no Poncho."

Mongo Santamaria's unique contributions to jazz and pop music earned him a successful recording career (more than forty albums), including a Grammy award for 1977's *Amancer*. They also earned him the love and respect of musicians and music fans alike for generations to come.

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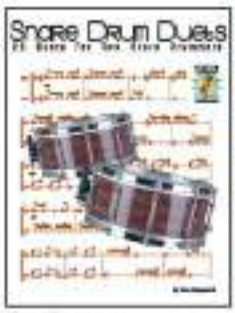

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Andy Graham of Sebastopol, California is a self-described rock drummer. But in 1994 he was introduced to the Aboriginal didgeridoo. Enjoying the powerful sound of this unique instrument, he learned to play it, and occasionally used it on gigs when the music didn't require drums. When switching between the instruments proved awkward, Andy built a special stand to hold a didgeridoo at face level, so he could play it without leaving the drums. Then, as a challenge to himself, he learned to play the didgeridoo and the drums at the same time.

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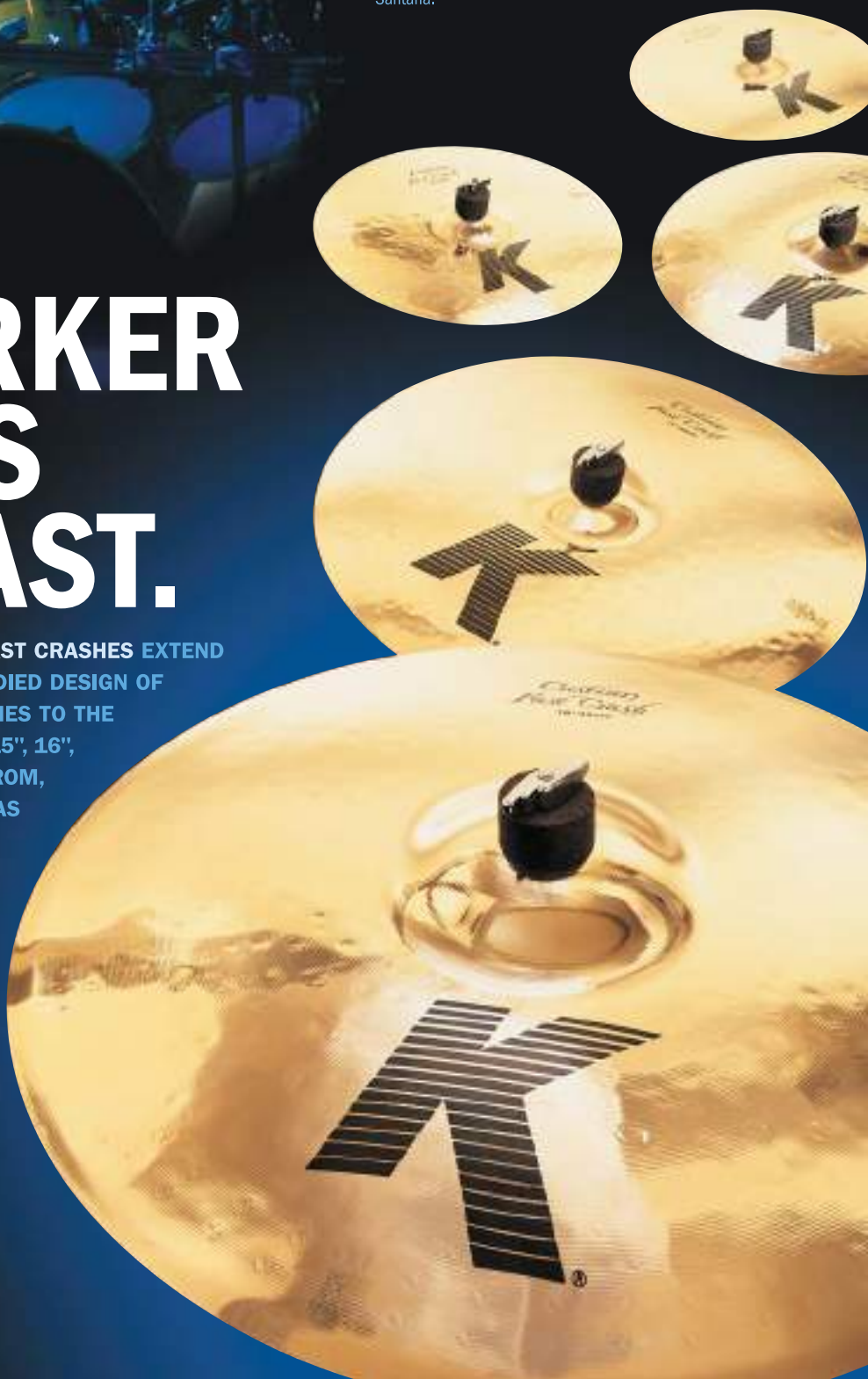

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